This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

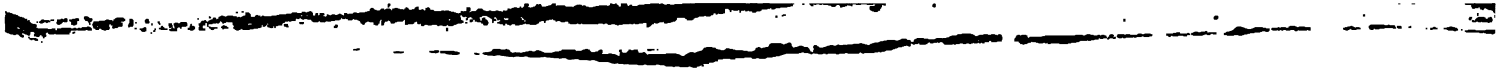
+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

3 3433 06183683 3

IV
M e .



MEMOIRS

OF

THE REIGN OF

GEORGE III.

TO

THE SESSION OF PARLIAMENT

ENDING A. D. 1793.

BY W. BELSHAM.

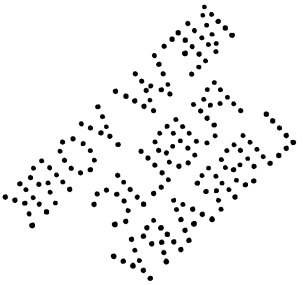
VOL. III.

Beneficio quàm metu obligare homines malit; exteraſque gentes fide ac ſocietate junctas habere, quàm triſti ſubjectas ſervitio. LIV. lib. 26.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR G. G. AND J. ROBINSON, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1795.



CONTENTS.

BOOK XIX.

Page

Session of Parliament in November 1779 2
Lord Rockingham's spirited Amendment to the Address.. 3
Earl of Ossory's Motion respecting Ireland 10
Humiliating Confession of Earl Gower 15
Lord North's Propositions respecting Ireland 15
Estimate of the National Force 16
Petitions to Parliament on the Subject of Public Œconomy 17
Reform Bills introduced by Mr. Burke 19
Commission of Accounts instituted 20
Earl of Shelburne's Motion of Reform 20
Famous Motion of Mr. Dunning, affirming the Increase of Regal Influence 24
Other Motions carried in Opposition to the Court .... 26—28
Illness of the Speaker 29
The Efforts of the Patriots prove finally abortive 29
Riots in London excited by the Catholic Act 31
Laudable Conduct of the King 34
Sanguinary Severities of Lord Loughborough 35
Duke of Richmond's Proposition for Annual Parliaments 36
Alliance with Holland dissolved 40
Armed Neutrality 41
Victory of Sir George Rodney over the Spanish Fleet off Cape St. Vincent 43
Indecisive Engagements in the West Indies, between Sir George Rodney and the Count de Guichen 44

CONTENTS.

Page

West Florida conquered by the Spaniards..... 45
Fortress of Omoa captured by the English..... 45
East and West India Fleets taken by the Spaniards..... 45
Military Operations in America..... 45
Philanthropic Act passed by the Legislature of Pennsylvania..... 46
Defection of General Arnold..... 48
Victory gained by Lord Cornwallis at Camden..... 50
Defeat of Major Ferguson at King's Mountain..... 52
Extravagant Exultation of the Court Faction in England.. 53
Rupture with Holland..... 54
Dissolution of Parliament..... 58
Remarkable Address of Sir George Saville..... 58
Meeting of the New Parliament, October 1780..... 60
Mr. Cornwall Speaker..... 60
Debates on the Declaration of War against Holland.... 63
Reform Bill of Mr. Burke revived and rejected..... 68
Corrupt and extravagant Loan of Lord North..... 69
Pacificatory Motion of Mr. Fox..... 72
Review of the Administration of Mr. Hastings in India.. 73
Confederacy of the Powers of India against the English.. 134

BOOK XX.

Distress of the Government of Bengal..... 136
Ravages of Hyder Ali in the Carnatic..... 201
Naval Encounters in the East Indies..... 203
Parliamentary Proceedings against Sir Thomas Rumbold.. 205
Sir Elijah Impey recalled from India..... 206
Ineffectual Resolution of the House of Commons for the Recall of Mr. Hastings..... 206
Military Operations in India..... 209
Exertions of General Goddard..... 209
Death of Hyder Ali—Disasters in Mysore..... 212
Resignatiou of Mr. Hastings—His Character..... 225

CONTENTS.

Page

Attempt on the Isle of Jersey..... 231
Capture of St. Eustatia..... 232
Tobago taken by the French 234
Eustatia retaken by the French..... 235
Naval and Military Operations in America 236
Colonel Tarleton defeated at the Cowpens..... 238
Victory of Lord Cornwallis at Guildford..... 241
General Green's masterly Conduct..... 243
Military Character of General Green 246
Lord Cornwallis's Successes in Virginia..... 247
Reverse of Fortune—Retreat to York Town.....248, 249
Lord Cornwallis and his Army made Prisoners of War... 254
Solemn Thanksgiving throughout the States of the Union 255
Commodore Johnstone's Expedition to the Cape of Good Hope..... 256
Obstinate Engagement between the English and Dutch Fleets off the Dogger Bank..... 257
Spirited Proceedings of the Parliament and People of Ireland 258

BOOK XXI.

Session of Parliament, November 1781..... 261
Infatuation of Ministers..... 261
Speech from the Throne 261
Character of the KING..... 262
Memorable Debate on the Address..... 264
Motion condemnatory of the American War by Sir James Lowther..... 270
Debate on the Army Estimates 273
Motion of Censure on the Earl of Sandwich, by Mr. Fox 277
Lord George Germaine advanced to the Peerage..... 278
Protest of the Lords against it..... 279
Mr. Fox renews his Motion of Censure on the Earl of Sandwich 280

BOOK XIX. 1779.

lord Stormont, had suffered themselves to be deceived by the craft of Spain and France; and the confidence with which ministers had assured parliament that treaties inimical to the interests of Great Britain were not in existence, or even in *embryo*. The address recognised the blessings of his majesty's government; but that recognition was unfounded in truth, and an insult to the house. There was a time, indeed, at which he could have congratulated the king on the blessings enjoyed under his government. He remembered when his majesty ascended the throne of his ancestors with glory and lustre; but for the last seventeen years those blessings had gradually decreased, and the nation was at length reduced to an unexampled state of degradation. This change he attributed to a baleful and pernicious system of unconstitutional advice and control, the effects of which extended themselves to every department. The discontents in Ireland his lordship ascribed to the bad faith of ministers, who promised to produce measures for their relief before the rising of parliament; but although the session continued seven weeks they had paid no further attention to the subject. The people were consequently left in suspense; the associators were permitted to become important; and concessions which would then have been received as favours were now demanded as rights, not to be resigned, modified, or qualified.

The marquis then, adverting to the progress of hostilities in America, censured, with unrestrained and merited severity, the proclamation issued by the commissioners, as an accursed manifesto, the forerunner of a war of the most horrid nature; a war not merely contrary to the christian religion, to the acknowledged principles of morality and humanity, but to the laws of war, and the modes of carrying on hostilities among Turkish and other the most sanguinary nations. It would be a precedent and a justification to France and Spain, should they land on the defenceless parts of the British coast, and commit the most wanton and unprovoked ravages. His lordship concluded a speech of various excellence with moving an amendment, omitting the whole address except the initiatory words of form, and beseeching his majesty to reflect upon the extent of territory, power and opulence, of reputation abroad and concord at home, which distinguished the opening of his majesty's reign, and marked it as the most splendid and happy period in the history of this nation; and to turn his eyes on the present endangered, impoverished, distracted, and even dismembered state of the empire, after all the grants of successive parliaments, liberal even to profusion, and trusting to the very utmost extent of rational confidence;—and finally stating to his majesty, that if any thing could prevent the consummation of public ruin, it can be only new counsels and new coun-

BOOK XIX. 1779.

sellors, a real change from the conviction of past errors,—and not a mere palliation, which must prove fruitless.

The marquis of Rockingham was supported in this interesting and important motion of amendment by the dukes of Richmond and Grafton, the earls of Shelburne and Effingham, lord Camden, and all the most distinguished peers in opposition. The defence on the part of ministers was unusually feeble. Lord Stormont imputed a great part of the public misfortunes to the incautious and too often violent language held in parliament—a contemptible argument, the validity of which can only be maintained by going the extravagant length of affirming that the most absurd and pernicious measures of government ought to pass without any harshness of animadversion from those who are best able to expose their weakness or their guilt.

Lord Mansfield declared, that, from the distressed and perilous situation of the country, he was persuaded nothing but a full and comprehensive union of all parties and all men could effect its salvation. He was old enough to remember the realm in very embarrassing situations. He had seen violent party struggles; but no previous time presented an image of the present. How far the temper of the nation and the state of parties might admit of a coalition, he could not decide; but the event was devoutly to be wished. Such was the alarming state of affairs, that

the country loudly claimed the assistance of every heart and hand. BOOK XIX. 1779.

Doubtless an union of parties is, abstractedly speaking, at all times a very desirable thing; and if the causes preventive of union are of a personal nature merely, the removal of them is *devoutly to be wished*. But if the country is divided into two opposite parties, one of which, by its obstinate perseverance in a series of ruinous and unconstitutional measures, has reduced the nation to the most dangerous extremities; and the other has uniformly foreseen and foretold the consequences which would inevitably result from them, has in vain for a long succession of years admonished, warned, and implored the adverse party to desist from those evil courses, and to return to the good old paths, which reason, equity and justice have so clearly marked out; if, in return, they have been treated with every species of reproach and contumely, and even, by the vilest of falsehoods, declared to be the authors of the mischiefs which they dreaded and deprecated;—between two such parties, whatever candour may suggest in palliation of the errors of individuals, no political amity, no alliance, no coalition, can ever take place. With such pernicious principles there can be no compromise. The great cause of humanity is at issue; and it must either rise ultimately triumphant, or its advocates and defenders must be prepared to perish with it.

BOOK XIX. 1779.

The amendment of lord Rockingham was in fine negatived, on a division of 82 to 41 voices.

Lord John Cavendish moved in the house of commons an amendment agreeing verbatim with that of the marquis of Rockingham. Adverting happily and forcibly to the mention of Divine Providence in the speech from the throne, he observed that Providence was indeed the great ally to whom alone the kingdom owed its preservation: an inferior fleet hiding among the rocks, and shunning the foe, a defenceless coast, an exhausted treasury, presented an easy prey to the enemy. Ministers supine, negligent, divided, had brought the realm to the verge of destruction; but Providence interposed and saved us from the danger. Such were the follies, the inconsistencies, and the criminalities of administration, that unless they were banished from the royal presence, and the system which they had acted upon totally overturned, the nation must inevitably fall under the power of its enemies.

Mr. Fox, as usual, distinguished himself by the boldness and energy of his observations. He said that "the plan of government which had been in this reign so pertinaciously pursued had been very early adopted. It was not the mere rumor of the streets that the king was his own minister; the fatal truth was evident; and though denied by the members of the administration, it was propagated by their followers. It was a doctrine in the highest degree dangerous,

as tending to relieve ministers from their responsi- BOOK XIX.
bility, and to transfer it to a personage who could 1779.
not, by the principles of our constitution, be called to an account. But he said, it should be a warning to sovereigns, that though in general the evils of a reign were, according to the principles of our government, ascribed to the wicked counsels of ministers, yet, when these evils reach to a certain height, ministers are forgotten, and the prince alone is punished. Thus it was with the royal house of Stuart.—CHARLES and JAMES had no doubt wicked ministers, to whom the errors of their reign were justly in a great degree to be attributed. Yet the one lost his life, and the other his crown. The patience of the people was not unlimited; and however passive for a time, they would at last do themselves justice.

"No period in the history of the country," he observed, "furnished so just a parallel to the present as the reign of Henry VI. His family, like that of the king, did not claim the crown by hereditary right. Both owed it to revolutions. Both were amiable and pious princes. Both were descended from renowned and illustrious progenitors. Henry lost all his father's conquests, and all his hereditary provinces in France. George had already seen the conquests of his grandfather wrested from him in the West Indies; and his hereditary provinces of America erected into an empire that disclaimed all connection. Brighter prospects could not be imagined

BOOK XIX. 1770.

than those which distinguished the commencement of his majesty's reign. Possessed of immense dominions and the warmest affections of his people, his accession was highly flattering to himself and his subjects. How lamentably was the scene reversed! His empire dismembered, his counsels distracted, and his subjects discontented or disaffected.—Treachery, and not ignorance, must have prevailed in the national councils to reduce the nation to so miserable a condition. Ministers might flatter themselves in the protection of a majority, or the security of the law; but when a nation was reduced to such a state of wretchedness and distraction that the laws could afford the people no relief, they would afford those who had caused the evil but little protection."

Mr. Temple Luttrel remarked, that three northern oracles of the long robe, alluding to the lord advocate Dundas, the attorney-general Wedderburne, and the lord chief justice Mansfield, had introduced a baleful policy into the government. "Taxation or starvation!" exclaims one—"Let loose the Indians!" cries the second—"We have passed the Rubicon!" says the third: "we must go forward through proscriptions, devastation, and carnage." Instructed by these political commentaries, future civil and military leaders may learn their best lessons of barbarity, and improve in every art of increasing human wretchedness. Yet perhaps the day is not far distant, when, in the words of their countryman

Macbeth, they may be compelled to confess that they have but taught bloody instructions, which being learned return to plague the inventors. BOOK XIX. 1778.

Lord George Gordon, brother to the duke of Gordon, by an attack equally eccentric and violent, exhibited, however, a sufficient proof that all the Scots were not in alliance with the ministry. Adverting to a late petition to government from the inhabitants of the shire of Dumfries, which had been exposed to the incursions of Paul Jones and other depredators, for arms to be used for the purpose of their own defence, and which had met, as his lordship represented, with a rude refusal from the secretary at war, he read to the house the letter written by the secretary to the duke of Queensberry on the occasion: then suddenly apostrophising that minister, "And you, Charles Jenkinson," he exclaimed, "how durst you write such a letter? ROBERT BRUCE would not have dared to write such an one: and yet the secretary of an elector of Hanover has had the presumption to do it! and the great earl Douglas of Scotland is not to be intrusted with arms!"

Mr. Minchin, a gentleman of the west, declared the garrison of Plymouth to have been, at the time the combined fleets appeared in the channel, so weak, and so little capable of resistance, that, had the enemy landed, they must have destroyed the town. "We would have met them," said he, "with

BOOK XIX. 1779.

the spirit of Englishmen; but sure I am, that to a man we must have perished."

Amid this torrent of accusation and invective, lord North, in mild language, endeavoured to convince the house, that a review of the last campaign would show that disgrace, not honor, had accrued from it to the enemy. They had equipped a formidable armament, threatened, performed nothing, and retired. Their professed object was invasion: they had not dared to make the attempt, and were therefore foiled. Their armaments had paraded to no purpose, and their millions were squandered in vain. On the other hand, our navy was daily augmenting; and though he was averse to render disappointment dreadful by sanguine predictions, he had the firmest hope of a brilliant campaign in the spring. He, in common with all the other ministers, concurred in denying that they had endeavoured to evade responsibility by implicating the personal character of his majesty in their measures. Such an attempt, it was alleged, would not have been less absurd than unconstitutional, since the law annexed to their situations a responsibility which no artifice could compromise or avoid.

His lordship acknowledged that the amendment proposed by the noble lord contained no language that was unparliamentary. It was, he confessed, the duty of parliament to cause bad ministers to be removed; but he insisted that proof should first be

made of their delinquency. The disapprobation of that house must and ought to sweep ministers before it; and whenever his day of account should come, he declared himself ready to meet it without fear. BOOK XIX. 1779.

The amendment was in the result negatived by 233 voices to 134.

On the 6th of December, a resolution of censure on the ministers was moved in the house of commons by the earl of Upper Ossory, relative to the affairs of Ireland. This nobleman possessed large property in that kingdom, and was moreover distinguished by a general candour and liberality of conduct, which gave peculiar weight to his present animadversions. His lordship observed, that "the ministers seemed totally to have abandoned the government of that country to chance. They neither felt for its distresses nor provided against its resentments. The present state of Ireland, his lordship said, was truly alarming, and seemed to portend a sudden dissolution of the constitutional connection which had so long subsisted between the two countries. To the shameful inattention and criminal neglect of the ministry, who might in the early stages of the miseries of that kingdom have granted the Irish nation substantial relief, was the present spirit of resistance wholly imputable. To what had the conduct of ministers led? Either to an unreserved acquiescence in every proposition which Ireland in Earl of Ossory's motion respecting Ireland.

BOOK XIX. 1778.

her present distempered state might think proper to demand, or the horrible alternative of a civil war while engaged in the present unequal contest with France, Spain and America." This motion was powerfully supported by Mr. Dunning, a lawyer and speaker of great eminence both in the house and at the bar; and in a speech of the most sarcastic severity by Mr. Burke, who drew a strong and provoking parallel between the situation of Ireland and that of America. In the former, as a few years since in the latter, non-importation agreements had taken place. The Irish, like the Americans, had resolved to consume no more British manufactures. They had armed and arrayed themselves, and now insisted on a free trade, or were determined to break off all political connexion with this country. "Why then," he asked, "had not the ministry adopted the same measures respecting Ireland as they had respecting America? Why had they not treated Dublin as they had treated Boston? Why had they not shut up the port of Dublin, burnt Cork, and reduced Waterford to ashes? Why had they not prohibited all popular meetings in that kingdom, and destroyed all popular elections? Why had they not altered the usual mode of striking juries, as was done by the Massachussets Bay charter bill? Why were not the Dublin rioters brought over to this country to be tried by an English jury? Why were not the principal leaders of the Irish armed associations pro-

scribed, and the whole kingdom declared to be in rebellion? The answer was plain and direct. The ministry dare not. Sad and dear-bought experience had even taught *them* the folly as well as impracticability of such measures. The danger of the present awful moment had made insolence and arrogance give way to fear and humiliation. The motion was opposed in an elaborate speech by lord North, who declared his intention to bring forward certain resolutions respecting Ireland in a few days, which he trusted would meet the ideas of gentlemen on both sides of the house. It was negatived by 173 voices to 100. A similar motion of censure in the house of peers by the earl of Shelburne was negatived by 82 to 37 voices. In the course of the debate which arose on this occasion, the late lord president Gower asserted his entire conviction that the censure now moved had a just and adequate foundation. "He had presided," his lordship said, "some years at the council-table, where HE HAD SEEN SUCH THINGS PASS, THAT NO MAN OF HONOR OR CONSCIENCE COULD ANY LONGER SIT THERE. The times were such as called upon every man to speak out; sincerity and activity in our councils could alone restore energy and effect to our government." On the day previously fixed, lord North brought forward his propositions respecting Ireland, which were substantially the same with those originally moved by lord Nugent

BOOK XIX. 1779.

Humiliating confession of earl Gower.

Lord North's propositions respecting Ireland.

BOOK XIX. 1779.

in the session of 1778, but accompanied with several additional concessions, particularly the very important one that Ireland should be allowed the free exportation of her woollens. These resolutions passed unanimously, and were received in Ireland not only with satisfaction but exultation, from the flattering and delusive expectation of deriving from them an effectual and immediate relief to her distresses.

Estimate of the national force.

The attention of the public in England was not a little attracted by the estimates of the army and navy, which were about this time laid before parliament. Eighty-five thousand men had been at an early period of the session voted for the sea service, and before the recess the secretary at war moved, "that one hundred and eleven thousand men be voted for the land service, exclusive of militia, amounting with the additional volunteer companies to forty-two thousand. The foreign troops in British pay were calculated at twenty-four thousand, and the artillery at six thousand. The entire aggregate of this formidable force, therefore, fell little short of two hundred and seventy thousand men, without including the troops serving upon the Irish or Indian establishments. To support this vast force twelve millions were raised by way of loan, in addition to the permanent means of supply; and those who most deplored the incredible and enormous folly which had reduced the nation to a situation so critical and dangerous, could not but view with plea-

sure and astonishment the power, the riches, and the spirit now displayed in defence of all that was dear and valuable to a free and independent people. The opposition in parliament had been for some time past gradually acquiring strength; and the nation at large, notwithstanding their original predilection for the war, began at length to be seriously alarmed at the magnitude of the contest, and the prodigious and ruinous expense with which it was attended. The undisguised and unexampled profusion which pervaded every department of government could not but strike the most careless observer: and, on a sudden, ŒCONOMY became the prevailing and popular cry throughout the kingdom.

Petitions to parliament on the subject of public œconomy.

Early in the new year, 1780, public meetings were convened in most of the principal counties, and petitions to parliament were framed, with the laudable and express view of establishing a system founded upon principles of strict and disinterested frugality. The county of York, with great propriety and effect, took the lead on this occasion. In their petition to the house of commons they earnestly requested, "that, before any new burdens were laid upon this country, effectual measures might be taken by that house to enquire into and correct the gross abuses in the expenditure of the public money; to reduce all exorbitant emoluments; to rescind and abolish all sinecure places and unmerited pensions; and to appropriate the produce to the necessities of

BOOK XIX. 1780.

the state in such manner as to the wisdom of parliament should seem meet." This petition was presented to the house on the 8th of February, 1780, by sir George Saville, member for the county, who stated, that it was signed by above eight thousand freeholders. This petition, he said, had been procured by no underhand arts or public canvass; it was first moved in a meeting of six hundred gentlemen; and there was, he believed, more property in the hall where it was agreed to, than was contained within the walls of the house of commons. It was a petition, he said, to which the administration would not DARE to refuse a hearing, however the arts of ministerial artifice and finesse might be employed to defeat the purpose of it*." A number

* The chief and almost the only opposer of this famous petition was a Mr. Leonard Smelt, who had formerly occupied the important office of sub-governor to the prince of Wales. This gentleman, in an elaborate harangue, avowed and vindicated the principles of Toryism in their full extent. He declared "the influence of the crown not to be exorbitant—on the contrary, that the king's hands ought to be strengthened—that the proceedings of that day tended to confusion, as aiming to put the king under the guardianship of parliament, and to incite to an illegal interference with the prerogative. He charged his opponents with wanting to withdraw the sacred veil that hides from the people the splendor of majesty. He insisted upon the immortality and impeccability of the king—affirming the protection of the sovereign to be the liberty of the subject. He exclaimed against the Whigs, as actuated by an illiberal and selfish policy—quoting the well known aphorism

1780.

Reform bills introduced by Mr. Burke

of other petitions of similar import being presented, Mr. Burke at length brought forward a specific plan of reform, professedly aiming at two grand objects: "first, the reduction of the national expenditure; second, the diminution of regal influence—that influence which took away all vigor from our arms, wisdom from our councils, and every shadow of authority and credit from the most venerable parts of the constitution."—To effect these purposes, Mr. Burke moved for leave to bring in certain bills for the better regulation of his majesty's civil establishments, for the sale of forest and other crown lands, for more perfectly uniting to the crown the principality

of sir Robert Walpole, "that every man had his price." The Whigs had usurped the power, and left the name only to the king. The Whigs had caused the war in America, and fomented the disturbances in Ireland. Lord Chatham, though he had glared a meteor in a storm, wanted the qualifications necessary to a minister in times of peace. He repeated, that the calamities of the country did not originate from the influence of the king, but from his not possessing influence enough. He did not think that at this time there was a disinterested patriot in Britain. If, said this courtly orator, there is one, he now sits upon the throne. And he vehemently deprecated that *false principle* on which parliament was called to interfere with the prerogative of the crown." As containing the opinions of an isolated individual, this speech could excite no other emotion than contempt: but considering Mr. Smelt as the organ of a dark, subtle, and inveterate court-faction, it was calculated to excite the highest alarm, resentment, and indignation.

BOOK XIX. 1780.

of Wales, the counties palatine of Chester and Lancaster, and the duchy of Cornwall. But these bills, after a violent conflict, in the course of which the minister was more than once left in a minority, were finally lost.

Commission of accounts instituted.

A notice given by colonel Barré of an intention to move for the appointment of a select committee to inspect the public accounts, seemed, however, to meet with universal approbation. It was for that reason, therefore, artfully and unfairly taken up by the minister himself, who abruptly brought in a bill, contrary to the remonstrances of colonel Barré, and the concurring resentment of a large proportion of the house, for instituting a commission of accounts, consisting of persons *not members* of the house of commons. This was deemed unparliamentary, and in strong language opposed as an abdication of the rights and privileges of the house. But it passed into a law by a considerable majority; and the successive reports of the commissioners appointed in virtue of this act, form, by their accuracy, ability, and impartiality, the best reply to the various objections urged against it.

Earl of Shelburne's motion of reform.

The house of peers in the mean time were far from being indolent or inattentive spectators of the interesting scenes now passing. On the very day that the petition of the county of York was presented to the house of commons, the earl of Shelburne moved, in the house of peers, "for the ap-

pointment of a committee of members of both houses of parliament, possessing neither employments nor pensions, to examine into the public expenditure, and the mode of accounting for the same." This motion was supported by his lordship in a very able speech, in which he declared, "that the great point to which his wishes tended, and to effect which his motion was chiefly framed, was to annihilate that undue influence operating upon both houses of parliament, which, if not eradicated, would prove the destruction of this country. To restore to parliament its constitutional independence, and to place government upon its true foundations, wisdom, justice, and public virtue, was (the noble earl said) his most earnest desire, and this could not be effected without striking at the root of parliamentary corruption.—Exclusive of this great and primary object, his lordship shewed, that the most shameful waste of the public money had taken place in every branch of the national expenditure. To support a most ruinous and disgraceful war—a wicked, bloody, and unjust war! the minister had borrowed year after year upon fictitious and unproductive taxes, and anticipated the produce of the sinking fund to answer his own views. Solely intent upon BORROWING, he appeared to have lost sight of every idea of decreasing the debt. It was the uncontroled possession of the public purse which created that corrupt and dangerous influence in parliament, of

BOOK XIX. 1780.

which such fatal use had been made; which put into the minister's hands the means of delusion, which served to fortify him in his mad career, and which left no hope or prospect of punishing him for the enormity of his crimes. Influence so employed his lordship declared to be a curse far greater, and more to be deprecated, than pestilence or famine. The present motion, the noble earl observed, was not of a nature novel to parliament; in former times, particularly in the years 1702, 1703, and 1717, there had been commissioners of accounts appointed by act of parliament. The object of the proposition now before the house was of a nature exactly similar, and it went to the abolition of all offices, whatever their salaries or appointments, that answered no other end but that of increasing the undue and unconstitutional influence of the crown." In support of the motion, the duke of Grafton declared, "that, from his own knowledge and immediate observation, he could assert with confidence that the spirit of discontent and dissatisfaction was almost universally gone forth, and that the petitions recently presented expressed the genuine sense of the people." On the other hand, lord Chesterfield, a young man not distinguished by the eminence either of his knowledge or talents, and who had lately taken his seat in the house on the decease of his illustrious relation, the famous earl of Chesterfield, affirmed, with singular temerity, that "the

majority of the people were well contented under the present government, and that the county petitions and associations were the last struggles of an EXPIRING FACTION." The lords Stormont, Mansfield, and the lord chancellor, maintained, with far more plausibility, "that the present motion was a violation of the inherent exclusive privilege of the other house to control the public expenditure, which no composition, compromise, or compact, would induce them to part with. They insisted that the motion was brought forward to embarrass government, and to throw an odium upon his majesty's confidential advisers; and that the petitions with which the motion was connected were filled with absurd and impracticable notions of public reform, and specious theories calculated to mislead the nation, and to introduce universal confusion." The marquis of Rockingham distinguished himself in the debate by an animated speech in defence of the motion. His lordship said, "that a system had been formed at the accession of his majesty to govern this country under the *forms of law*, but in reality through the immediate influence of the crown. This was the origin of all our national misfortunes; the measures of the present reign wore every internal and external evidence of that dangerous and alarming origin; and, when combined, they presented such a system of corruption, venality, and despotism, as had never perhaps been known under any

BOOK XIX. 1780.

BOOK XIX. 1780.

form of free and limited government. This system he had for seventeen years uniformly and vigorously opposed, and particularly during the short time he had presided at the head of the Treasury, but to very little purpose. As he had come into office at his majesty's desire, so he had quitted it in obedience to his authority. His lordship implored the ministry not to persist in that blind and hitherto invincible spirit of obstinacy, which had brought the nation into its present calamitous situation, but to pay some attention to the voice of the people, and the interests of their country." On the division the numbers were, NON-CONTENTS 101, CONTENTS *55*, five-and-thirty of whom entered their protest on the journals. This was the largest minority that had for many years been known in the house of peers in opposition to the court; and, exclusive of placemen, pensioners, and bishops, this expiring faction constituted a clear and decisive majority of the lords present at this interesting discussion.

Famous motion of Mr. Dunning, affirming the increase of regal influence.

On the 6th of April the house of commons resolved itself, on the motion of Mr. Dunning, into a grand committee, in order to take the petitions of the people into consideration; and on this occasion a most extraordinary and memorable debate arose. "The first object," Mr. Dunning said, "which he meant to submit to the house, was a proposition collected from the several petitions, which, if agreed to, would establish the grounds of their prayer for

redress. His second proposition should include the means of that redress. Should the house concur in his propositions, he meant to follow them up with real, substantial, and practicable measures. But, should they dissent from them, or endeavour to evade or procrastinate, there would be at once an end of the petitions and a full answer to the petitioners. His first motion was, that it should be resolved by this house, "that the INFLUENCE of the CROWN had increased, was increasing, and ought to be diminished." This motion was, by a singular fortune, warmly supported by the speaker of the house, who, though rarely accustomed to take part in their debates, declared, "that, on an occasion like the present, he should deem himself criminal in remaining silent; the resolution proposed contained an allegation which was too notorious to require proof—which in its full extent did not admit of proof—it could be known only to the members of that house:—as they were the only persons competent to resolve it, they were bound as jurors by the conviction arising in their own minds, and were obliged to determine accordingly. The powers constitutionally vested in the executive part of the government were (he said) amply sufficient for all the purposes of good government, but its undue influence had increased to a degree absolutely incompatible with every just idea of a limited monarchy. What the petitioners demanded should

BOOK XIX. 1780.

have originated within those walls; they were sitting as the representatives of the people, solely for their advantage and benefit, and were pledged to them for the faithful discharge of their trust." Notwithstanding the determined opposition of the minister and of the courtiers in general, particularly of the lord advocate of Scotland, Henry Dundas, who moved, as an amendment, to prefix the words "it is now necessary to declare," it appeared on the division, which took place at midnight, on the amended resolution, that the numbers were in favour of the motion 233, against it 215; so that the court was left in a minority of 18*. Mr. Dunning then moved, "that it was competent to that house to examine into and to correct abuses in the expenditure of the civil list, as well as in every other branch of the public revenue, whenever it shall seem expedient to the house to do so." This was

Other motions carried in opposition to the court.

* It is remarkable that, of thirty-three Scotch members who were present in the house of commons on this memorable occasion, twenty-eight voted against the motion of Mr. Dunning—a striking proof how greatly the influence of the crown was increased by the union of the kingdoms; as indeed, through some strange fatality, by almost every great political event, whether originating in folly or wisdom, whether terminating in success or misfortune, which has taken place in this country during the course of the present century. The influence of the crown in its existing state is a monster unknown to the constitution, and which, if the constitution is

again opposed by lord North, who, in the strongest terms, expressed his wishes that the committee would not proceed. The motion was nevertheless agreed to by the house. Mr. Thomas Pitt then moved, "that it was the duty of that house to provide, as far as might be, an immediate and effectual redress of the abuses complained of in the petitions presented to the house from the different counties, cities, and towns, in this kingdom." The minister once more earnestly implored the committee to desist, but with no effect; the motion was agreed to. It was lastly moved by Mr. Fox, "that the resolutions should be immediately reported to the house; which was deprecated and protested against by lord North, as violent, arbitrary, and contrary to the established usage of parliament. The motion, however, was carried; and the chairman reporting the resolutions accordingly, they were severally agreed to by the house.

unable to destroy, must ultimately be the destroyer of it. "The influence of the crown," said the earl of Chatham in an interesting debate in the house of lords, May 1771, "is become so enormous that stronger bulwarks must be erected for the defence of the constitution. The Septennial Act must be repealed. Formerly the inconveniences attending short parliaments had great weight with me, but now we are not debating a question of convenience. OUR ALL IS AT STAKE. OUR WHOLE CONSTITUTION IS GIVING WAY; and with the most deliberate and solemn conviction I profess myself a convert to triennial parliaments."

BOOK XIX. 1780.

On the 10th of April, the committee being resumed, Mr. Dunning congratulated the house upon the late decisions, which he however said could avail little unless the house proceeded effectually to remedy the grievances complained of by the people. The alarming and increasing influence of the crown being now admitted by a solemn decision of that house, it was incumbent upon them to go from generals to particulars. With a view therefore of extirpating that corrupt influence, he should move, "that there be laid before the house every session, within seven days after the meeting of parliament, an account of all moneys paid out of the civil revenue to, or for the use of, or in trust for, any member of parliament since the last recess." This was objected to by lord North, the lord advocate of Scotland, the attorney-general Wedderburne, &c. but was carried without a division. Mr. Dunning then moved, "that the persons holding the offices of treasurer of the chamber, treasurer of the household, cofferer of the household, comptroller of the household, master of the household, clerks of the green cloth, and their deputies, should be rendered incapable of a seat in that house." This was again opposed, and by the same persons as before; but, on a division, was carried by a majority of 215 to 213 voices. So far the patriotic party in parliament had triumphantly proceeded, to the infinite joy of the disinterested and independent part of the public,

when the sudden illness of the speaker obliged the house to adjourn to the 24th of April; on which day, the committee being resumed, Mr. Dunning moved for an address, "that his majesty would be pleased not to dissolve the parliament or prorogue the present session until the objects of the petitions were answered." When the house, after a vehement debate, came to a division on this important question, it was at once discovered that the unfortunate illness of the speaker, "whose health was never better worth than now," had infected "the very life-blood of their enterprise,"—the motion being rejected by a majority of 254 to 203.

Illness of the speaker.

During the recess, a sudden and fatal change had taken place in the temper and disposition of the house; and that influence of the crown which the parliament had determined *ought to be diminished*, was, as it now appeared, too firmly established to be in danger of diminution. Mr. Fox rose after the division, and in the most poignant language reprobated the conduct of those men who had thus receded from the solemn engagements they had so recently entered into; and Mr. Dunning scrupled not to charge these members with direct treachery to the nation, considering this resolution as an effectual bar to all future means and efforts of redress. So indeed it proved; for when, on a subsequent resumption of the subject, he moved "that the two resolutions passed on the 10th of April be re-

The efforts of the patriots prove finally abortive.

BOOK XIX. 1780.

ported," a motion was made from the opposite side of the house, "that the chairman leave the chair," which, on a division, was carried by a majority of 177 to 134 voices:—and thus miserably ended those deliberations, which once displayed so fair and flattering a prospect of political reform; and thus contemptuously were the petitions of more than one hundred thousand electors consigned to everlasting oblivion.

It is necessary to recall to our recollection, that an act of parliament had passed in the course of the session of 1778, relieving the Roman-catholics from some of the heavier penalties inflicted upon them in the last century. This act seemed to be well approved in England; but the fanatical spirit, unextinguished since the days of Knox, and which at the present period discovered itself by unequivocal symptoms in Scotland, prevented the extension of this very defective and imperfect toleration to that kingdom. On the bare suspicion of the intended indulgence, great tumults took place at Edinburgh and Glasgow, the Popish chapel in the metropolis was destroyed, and the houses of the principal catholics attacked and plundered; on which the lord provost, who had taken no steps to restrain these criminal excesses, published a singular proclamation, ascribing the riots to the "apprehensions, fears, and distressed minds of well-meaning people, and assuring them that no repeal of the Penal

Statutes would take place." Encouraged by this wretched pusillanimity, the fanatics formed themselves into a society, styled the "Protestant Association," to oppose any remission of the present persecuting laws against the Papists, and of this association lord George Gordon was chosen president—a man in the highest degree wild, eccentric, and enthusiastical. This association was gradually extended to England, and much pains were taken by inflammatory harangues and pamphlets to prejudice the minds of the vulgar against the late wise and salutary relaxation of the penal code *. It was at length determined to prepare a petition for a repeal of the law in question, which is affirmed to have obtained one hundred and twenty thousand signatures, *or marks*, of men of the lowest orders of society, whose excess of zeal could be equalled only by the grossness of their ignorance;—a combination of qualities at once ridiculous and terrible. Lord George Gordon, who was himself a member of the house of commons, declined to present this petition, unless he were accompanied to the house by at least twenty thousand men.

BOOK XIX. 1780.

A public meeting of the association was, in consequence, convened in St. George's Fields, June 2, 1780, whence it was supposed that not less than

Riots in London excited by the Catholic Act.

* "Those," says Dr. Johnson, "who in this age of infidelity exclaim Popery! Popery! would have cried fire in the midst of the general deluge."

BOOK XIX. 1780.

fifty thousand persons proceeded in regular divisions, with lord George Gordon at their head, to the house of commons, where their petition was presented by their president. Towards evening this multitude began to grow very tumultuous, and grossly insulted various members of both houses, compelling them, in passing to and from the house, to cry, No POPERY! and to wear blue cockades. During the debates on the petition, lord George Gordon frequently addressed the mob without, in terms calculated to inflame their passions, and expressly stating to them, "that the people of Scotland had no redress till they pulled down the Popish chapels." After the adjournment of the house, the mob, on this suggestion, immediately proceeded to the demolition of the chapels of the Sardinian and Bavarian ambassadors. The military being ordered out, could not prevent the mischief, but apprehended various of the ringleaders.

The next day, Saturday, passed quietly; but on Sunday the rioters re-assembled in vast numbers, and destroyed the chapels and private dwellings belonging to the principal Catholics in the vicinity of Moorfields.

On Monday they extended their devastations to other parts of the town; and Sir George Saville's house, in Leicester Fields, was totally demolished by these blind and barbarous bigots—that distin-

guished senator and patriot having had the honour to be the first mover of the bill. BOOK XIX. 1780.

On Tuesday, the day appointed for taking the petition into consideration, the mob again surrounded the parliament house, and renewed their outrages and insults. The house, after passing some resolutions adapted to the occasion, and expressive of their just indignation, immediately adjourned. In the evening the populace, now grown more daring than ever, attacked the prison of Newgate, where their comrades were confined, with astonishing resolution, and, setting the building in flames, liberated more than three hundred felons and debtors resident within its walls. Encouraged by the impunity with which they had hitherto acted, they now proceeded to lord Mansfield's house, in Bloomsbury-square, which they totally demolished, his lordship escaping not without difficulty. The prisons of Clerkenwell were also forced, many private houses plundered or destroyed, and scarcely did the night afford any cessation of the riots.

On the succeeding day, the mob, rendered more desperate by the mischiefs and villanies they had already perpetrated, attacked with incredible fury the houses of various individuals, chiefly Catholics, which they had previously marked for destruction. In the evening the King's Bench, the Fleet Prison, and the New Compter, were set on fire; and, with a prodigious number of private dwellings in different

BOOK XIX. 1780.

parts of the town burning at the same time, formed a tremendous scene of conflagration, to which London, since the great fire of 1666, had seen nothing parallel or similar.

The same day attempts were made by the rioters on the Bank and Pay-Office; but these, being strongly guarded, happily escaped that destruction which must have involved the whole nation in irreparable distress and ruin. What appeared most to excite the public indignation was the criminal supineness of the magistracy of London * during these horrible commotions, apparently threatening to lay the metropolis of the empire level with the ground, and which actually presented in many parts the image of a city stormed and sacked.

Laudable conduct of the king.

At length a privy council being convened, at which divers members of the opposition attended, the king himself declared, with laudable resolution, "that, although the magistrates had not done their duty, he would not be deficient in his;" and general orders were immediately transmitted to the mili-

* It most assuredly was not forgotten that Mr. Gillam, an excellent magistrate of the county of Surry, was tried at the Old Bailey for his life, in consequence of the order given by him at the riots in St. George's Fields, A. D. 1768, for the military to fire, after long and patiently enduring the severest provocations from the rioters, and twice reading the Riot Act. Such a precedent could not but tend, in similar emergencies, most dangerously to enfeeble the power of the executive government.

tary to fire upon the rioters, without waiting for directions from the civil magistrate; in consequence of which the slaughter was terrible: but in a short time the commotions were effectually suppressed, and by Thursday noon order and tranquillity were perfectly restored.

On that day lord George Gordon was taken into custody, and, after a strict examination before the privy council, committed close prisoner to the Tower on a charge of HIGH TREASON, for which there does not appear to have been sufficient ground, and on his trial he was subsequently acquitted. An impeachment by the house of commons for high crimes and misdemeanors would have been a mode of procedure far more eligible and efficacious, and would indubitably have insured that punishment which his rash and insolent conduct so justly merited.

A special commission was issued for the trial of the rioters, of whom a very great number, consisting of men very opposite in description and character, were apprehended. Lord chief-justice De Grey, whose mild and benignant disposition, as well as his infirm health, was ill-suited to this painful task, willingly resigning his office, the attorney-general Wedderburne was advanced to the chief justiceship, under the title of lord Loughborough. Considering the great number of lives necessarily sacrificed in the course of the riots, after the military began to act, it might have been hoped that a very few vic-

Sanguinary severities of lord Loughborough.

BOOK XIX. 1780.

tims would have sufficed to satisfy the vengeance of the law. But the new chief justice proceeded against the delinquents with great severity: no less than fifty-nine of the prisoners being capitally convicted; and the memory of these transactions was impressed upon the public mind in characters of blood.

Duke of Richmond's proposition for annual parliaments.

It is a remarkable circumstance, that upon the very day on which the riots commenced, the duke of Richmond gave notice of his design to bring in a bill for annual parliaments, and a more equal representation of the people in the house of commons. In his introductory speech this nobleman declared the national representation to be flagrantly and grossly corrupt. The constitution, he said, had been impaired, and was impairing daily by the accumulation of abuses: parliament, he affirmed, was becoming more and more servile: and the tendency of the prevailing system was to make the will of the sovereign the rule and measure of the government. He even went the violent and indecent length of asserting, that the present parliament was in reality no parliament at all, because it was not founded on that principle which could alone constitute them the legitimate representatives of the people. He thought the most effectual remedy for the existing evils would be to shorten the duration of parliaments, rendering them annual; and to cause every man in the kingdom, of full age and not disqualified by law, to be represented in the house of commons. The noble

mover proposed, that his bill should be read once only during the present session, and then to leave it upon the table, in order that it might be fully considered by their lordships in the months of the summer recess.

It happened very unfortunately for the credit of this famous project of democratic reform, that even whilst the duke of Richmond was speaking loudly and strenuously in its favor, the house was prevented from listening by the clamors and outrages of the lawless multitude without, who, according to the principles of this dangerous bill, were henceforth to be invested with the power of returning representatives to parliament; and the populace were at this moment on the point of rushing into the house, opposed only by the activity and resolution of the door-keepers and attendants. Divers peers were grossly insulted, and on entering exhibited proofs of the indignities they had sustained; and the house at length broke up in the utmost confusion.

It may well be supposed that this crude and indigested measure was never again revived in either house of parliament: but the bold and plausible, though erroneous and pernicious, principles on which it was founded, were for a series of years publicly avowed by this nobleman, and under his sanction they acquired great credit and currency.

On the 19th of June the parliament met pursuant to their adjournment, and the king, going in

BOOK XIX. 1780.

state to the house of peers, made a very judicious speech, "lamenting the necessity which had obliged him, by every tie of duty and affection to his people, to employ the force entrusted to him for the suppression of those acts of felony and treason, which had overborne all civil authority, and threatened the immediate subversion of all legal power, the destruction of all property, and the confusion of every order in the state;—at the same time renewing his assurances, that he had no other object than to make the laws of the realm, and the principles of the constitution, the rule and measure of his conduct."

An address of thanks was deservedly voted in reply to this speech, without a single negative.—The general effect of these recent commotions was very favorable to administration, by inspiring a too-well founded dread of popular interposition in any shape or upon any occasion, however apparently tending to the accomplishment of the most desirable and salutary purposes. After this, nothing of material import passed in either house of parliament; and on the 8th of July, 1780, an end was put to the present session.

The political alienation which had for some years taken place between England and Holland became daily more visible and notorious. A requisition had been made by the court of London to the States General, soon after the declaration of war against

Spain, for the succours stipulated by the treaty of 1678, confirmed by various subsequent agreements; but no answer could be obtained from their High Mightinesses. On the contrary, loud complaints were made of the conduct of the English court, which had caused to be seized, and carried into the different ports of Great Britain, ships belonging to the subjects of the republic, navigated under the faith of treaties, and not laden with contraband goods.—This, no doubt, was in many instances the fact. On the other hand, Great Britain complained, with equal truth, that France received from Holland continual supplies of naval and military stores, contrary to the faith of treaties; and that the principle of self-defence warranted the seizure and detention of all vessels laden with such exceptionable cargoes.

On the 1st of January, 1780, commodore Fielding fell in with a fleet of Dutch merchant ships off Portland, convoyed by a small squadron of men of war, commanded by count Byland. Captain Fielding, desiring permission to visit the merchant ships, in order to ascertain whether they contained any contraband goods, was refused by the Dutch admiral; on which he fired a shot a-head of the count, who returned a broadside: commodore Fielding did the same, and then the Dutch immediately struck their colors. Such of the merchant ships as had naval stores on board were stopped,

BOOK XIX. 1780.

and the Dutch admiral was informed that he was at liberty to hoist his colors and prosecute his voyage. But he refused to quit his convoy, and accompanied the commodore to Portsmouth. A memorial in strong and resentful terms was presented by count Welderen, by order of the States, in consequence of this transaction, which was represented as a direct attack upon the independence and sovereignty of their High Mightinesses, and a peremptory demand made of reparation and redress, to which no regard was paid. But on the 17th of April a declaration was published by the king of Great Britain, by which it was announced, "that repeated memorials having been presented by his majesty's ambassador to the States General, demanding the succours stipulated by treaty, to which requisition they had given no answer, nor signified any intention of compliance, his majesty considered their High Mightinesses as having deserted the alliance that had so long subsisted between Great Britain and the Republic: and his majesty from this time suspended, provisionally, all the stipulations of the several existing treaties, particularly of the marine treaty concluded at London, A. D. 1674."

Alliance with Holland dissolved.

Holland was, however, far from being singular in her complaints respecting the violated rights of neutrality. The powers of the Baltic, with a firmer tone, and in more decided language, declared their resolution to adopt such measures as were necessary

for their own security. Early in the spring, 1780, the empress of Russia addressed a declaration to the courts of London, Versailles, and Madrid, containing an explicit statement of the principles on which she had determined to act for the removal of those molestations which had interrupted the navigation of her subjects, and for the protection of the liberty of commerce in general. BOOK XIX. 1780.

The radical principles here laid down were:—I. That neutral ships should enjoy a free navigation even from port to port, and on the coasts of the belligerent powers.—II. That all effects belonging to the subjects of the belligerent powers shall be looked upon as free on board such neutral ships, excepting only warlike stores or ammunition—but neither the vessels, passengers, nor the rest of the goods, shall be liable to seizure or detention. "To these principles," her Imperial majesty declared, "she was firmly resolved to adhere; and, for the honor of her flag, and the security of her subjects, she had ordered a considerable part of her naval forces to be equipped, to act wherever her honor, interest, or necessity, should require."

Armed neutrality.

Denmark and Sweden acceding in form to this declaration of Russia, and ordering similar equipments of their marine, this confederacy of the powers of the north acquired the appellation of "the armed neutrality;" and the basis on which it was founded seemed to give universal satisfaction throughout

BOOK XIX. 1780.

Europe—England alone, against whom it was manifestly levelled, excepted.

In the answer of the king of France it was said, "that what her Imperial majesty claimed from the belligerent powers was nothing else than the rules actually prescribed to the French navy, and that solid advantages must result from this measure, not only to the subjects of Russia, but to all nations." The reply of England was cold, and civilly evasive; but this measure in reality excited so deep a resentment, that the conduct of England respecting Russia, for several years succeeding this period, may be ascribed chiefly, or solely, to the alienation and hatred originating in the present obnoxious procedure.

The war between Great Britain and Spain had scarcely commenced when the blockade of Gibraltar was formed by sea and land, and the hope of recovering that fortress probably operated as no inconsiderable inducement with Spain to engage in the present war.

Early in the year 1780, sir George Rodney, an officer distinguished by his gallant exertions in the late war, was appointed to the command of a powerful fleet, destined for the relief of that place, having on board prince William Henry, the third son of his majesty. On the northern coast of Spain he fell in with a convoy of twenty-two merchant ships, richly laden, under the protection of a squadron of

seven ships of war, to which he immediately gave chace, and in a few hours the whole were taken. This success was, however, only the prelude to another and much greater. BOOK XIX. 1780.

On the 16th of January, off Cape St. Vincent, he descried a Spanish squadron, consisting of fourteen sail of the line, which he directly bore down upon, and, notwithstanding the storminess incident to the season, taking the lee-gage, in order to prevent the enemy from retreating into their own ports; at four in the afternoon the action began, and in little more than half an hour, the San Domingo, one of the Spanish ships blew up with a dreadful explosion. The engagement nevertheless continued with unabating fury in the midst of darkness and confusion, and before morning the Phœnix of 80 guns, Don Juan de Langara, the Spanish admiral's own ship; the Monarca, the Princessa, the Diligentè of 70 guns each, struck their colors; the St. Julien and St. Eugenio were also captured, but through the violence of the tempest were afterwards driven on shore and lost. The others escaped in a very shattered condition; and the whole squadron, as to any immediate capability of service, might be considered as annihilated. Though the force of admiral Rodney was greatly superior, his skill and courage were fully apparent in the mode of conducting the attack, which the violence of the storm, the darkness of the night, and the vicinity of a

Victory of sir George Rodney over the Spanish fleet off Cape St. Vincent.

BOOK XIX. 1780.

lee-shore every where encircled with shoals and breakers, rendered very dangerous. The admiral's own ship, the Sandwich, and several others, were in extreme hazard of being lost on the shoals of St. Lucar, and did not get into deep water till the next day.

After effecting the primary object of his commission, the relief of Gibraltar, sir George Rodney proceeded to the West Indies, sending home his prizes under the care of admiral Digby, who on his passage captured the Prothée, a French ship of 64 guns, and part of her convoy of merchant ships.

Indecisive engagements in the West Indies between sir George Rodney and the count de Guichen.

1. No sooner had admiral Rodney taken upon him the command in the West Indies, than every possible exertion was made to bring on a general action, which count de Guichen, who commanded the French fleet, cautiously avoided; but intelligence being received that in the night of the 15th of April, 1780, they had put to sea with their whole force, admiral Rodney, who was stationed at St. Lucie, immediately followed, and early on the morning of the 17th came in sight of the enemy; at noon the admiral, being to windward, made the signal for a general and close engagement, setting himself a noble example of courage to the fleet by bearing down upon the French admiral, whom he fought with unremitting fury, attempting in vain, by a manœuvre long unpractised, to break

the enemy's line of battle, till M. de Guichen bore away, leaving the Sandwich, which, from causes not easily or clearly ascertainable, was with the exception of a few ships very ill supported in this action, a mere wreck upon the water. Other partial and indecisive encounters also took place, in which little inferiority of skill or courage was discernible on the part of the French officers or seamen.

West Florida conquered by the Spaniards.

During these transactions in the West Indies, Don Galvez, the Spanish governor of Louisiana, reduced the British settlements on the Mississippi, and had made great progress in the conquest of the province of West Florida, though Pensacola held out to the next year.

Fortress of Omoa captured by the English.

As a very inadequate counterbalance to these successes, an expedition had been undertaken from Jamaica to the Spanish main; and the fortress of Omoa, which contained a considerable booty in specie and merchandise, was taken by storm, but soon afterwards evacuated. A very heavy misfortune in the autumn of this year took place, in the entire capture of the outward-bound East and West India fleets, in the Bay of Biscay, by the Spaniards—a loss which had no parallel in the naval and commercial history of Great Britain, since the famous capture of the Smyrna fleet in the reign of king WILLIAM.

East and West India fleets taken by the Spaniards.

Military operations in America.

The war in the northern provinces of America seemed throughout the whole of the summer of

BOOK XIX. 1780. 1780 to be almost at a stand. On the 10th of July, a large body of French troops commanded by the comte de Rochambeau, under convoy of a considerable fleet, arrived at Rhode Island. This the comte assured the States was only the vanguard of a much greater force destined by the king, his sovereign, to their aid. A scheme was soon after formed by sir Henry Clinton and admiral Arbuthnot, of a combined attack against the French and Americans at Rhode Island; and a large proportion of the forces stationed at New York were embarked for that purpose: but general Washington, by a rapid movement passing the North River, and advancing to New York, compelled them to desist from their purpose.

Philanthropic act passed by the legislature of Pennsylvania.

It affords a grateful relief from the sensations which oppress the mind in listening to the tale of human folly and wretchedness, to revert to an act of the most exalted philanthropy passed about this period by the legislature of Pennsylvania to the following purport: "When we contemplate our abhorrence of the condition to which the arms and tyranny of Great Britain were exerted to reduce us—when we look back on the variety of dangers to which we have been exposed, and the deliverances wrought when hope and fortitude have become unequal to the contest,—we conceive it to be our duty, and rejoice that it is in our power, to extend a portion of that freedom to others which

hath been extended to us,—to add one more step to universal civilization, by removing, as much as possible, the sorrows of those who have lived in undeserved bondage. Weaned by a long course of experience from those narrow prejudices and partialities we had imbibed, we conceive ourselves, at this particular period, called upon, by the blessings we have received, to manifest the sincerity of our profession. In justice, therefore, to persons who, having no prospect before them whereon they may rest their sorrows and their hopes, have no reasonable inducement to render that service to society which otherwise they might; and also in grateful commemoration of our own happy deliverance from that state of UNCONDITIONAL SUBMISSION to which we were doomed by the tyranny of Britain; BE IT ENACTED, That no child born hereafter shall be a SLAVE; that Negro and Mulatto children shall be servants only till twenty-eight years of age; that all slaves shall be registered before the first of November next; that they shall be tried like other inhabitants; and that no Negroes or Mulattoes, other than infants, shall be bound for longer than seven years."—Such were the sentiments, and such the conduct, of a people once attached to Britain by every civil and social tie by which either dignity or advantage could be derived or durability be hoped—but whom Britain, in the hour of her insolence and

BOOK XIX.

infatuation, first attempted to treat as slaves, and then to punish as rebels.

1780. Defection of general Arnold.

Towards the autumn of the present year, a remarkable event took place in the defection of general Arnold, who commanded a considerable body of troops at West Point on the North River, and who, having long since entered into a secret correspondence with sir Henry Clinton, agreed to betray into his hands that important post, and the whole of the troops entrusted to him. The military talents and successes of Arnold had raised his reputation so high, that the danger of placing confidence in a man wholly destitute of honor and probity in private life was not sufficiently adverted to. The intercourse between the American and English generals was carried on through the medium of major André, a young man of singular accomplishments, who had passed up the river unknown and unsuspected from the head-quarters at New York to the post of West Point. But on his return by land, September 23d, after eluding the vigilance of the regular patroles, he was apprehended in disguise, and with a false passport, by three American privates, to whom he in vain offered great rewards if they would suffer him to escape. On examination, the papers found upon him, and which he had no opportunity to destroy, discovered all the particulars of the conspiracy. His case being

referred to a board of general officers, of which the marquis de la Fayette was one, they unanimously determined that he came under the denomination of a spy; and that, agreeably to the law and usage of nations, he ought to suffer death; which, notwithstanding the equally unavailing solicitations and menaces of sir Henry Clinton, who anxiously sought the means of saving him, was on the 2d of October inflicted in that degrading mode "which gives the brave the keenest wound." Such was the noble candor and magnanimity of his conduct consequent on the discovery, that the high character of the American commander would have derived additional lustre from indulging the earnest and sole request of major André, to be permitted to die as a soldier, not as a felon. General Arnold, with great difficulty, on the apprehension of major André, made his escape to New York, and was immediately promoted to the rank of brigadier-general in the king's service.

In the southern provinces the events of the war were of a nature more important and interesting. After the departure of sir Henry Clinton from Carolina, lord Cornwallis was left with a force apparently very inadequate to maintain possession of the province against the increasing armies of the Americans, of which general Gates, the conqueror of Burgoyne, had now taken the command. The British forces, having advanced towards the north frontier

BOOK XIX. 1780.

of the province, found their further progress intercepted by the enemy, who with far superior numbers were posted near the town of Camden. Lord Cornwallis, sensible that a retreat would be equivalent to an abandonment of the recent conquests, determined to risk an engagement; and in the night of the 15th of August, 1780, the troops were put in motion, in hope of surprising general Gates in his camp. That commander, with a view likewise to the surprisal of lord Cornwallis, had marched his troops during the night to the attack of the British camp, and the advanced parties of the two armies unexpectedly met in a wood near Camden. A sort of truce was observed till day-light appeared, when the action commenced on the part of the British general, who was well pleased to observe that the American commander had been under the necessity of taking a very disadvantageous and confined position, bounded by swamps on both sides, which prevented his making any efficacious use of his great superiority of numbers. The militia, of whom general Gates's army chiefly consisted, unable to resist the new and formidable attack of the bayonet, fled at the first onset. The continental troops maintained, nevertheless, their ground with great resolution; but, finding themselves totally deserted by the militia, who could never be brought to rally, were compelled to retreat, leaving behind them their cannon, camp-equipage, and stores. This victory

Victory gained by lord Cornwallis at Camden.

seems to have been the most complete which was obtained in the whole course of the war. The pursuit continued for more than twenty miles; and colonel Tarleton coming up with a detached corps at the Catawba fords under general Sumpter, charged them with such vigor that they were instantly broken, and the greater part either cut to pieces or taken prisoners.

General Gates, who thus unfortunately at Camden saw those laurels fade which he had so gloriously acquired at Saratoga, now, with little apparent attention to the point of honor, left the shattered remains of his army to the care of a general Smallwood, and retired into North Carolina to consult with the government of that province upon the means of future resistance and defence.

Lord Cornwallis, eager to improve his victory to the utmost, advanced, as soon as the excessive heats incident to the climate and season would permit, to the vicinity of Salisbury, on the frontier of North Carolina, having first detached major Ferguson to the western side of the province to collect and arm the royalists in that quarter. No sooner was the communication of this officer with lord Cornwallis interrupted by the extension of the distance, than a plan was formed to surround and cut him entirely off. Divers corps of the provincial militia effected a rapid junction with the mountaineers of the western districts, under the command of colonels Williams

BOOK XIX. 1780.

and Cleveland, to the amount of several thousand men, and, marching in quest of Ferguson, soon discovered his encampment on an eminence known by the name of King's Mountain. The Americans, dividing their force into different columns, ascended the hill in various directions, and attacked the royalists with great fury. Major Ferguson was successful on whichever side he directed his efforts; but no sooner was one division driven back, than the former resumed its station: so that his exertions were entirely unavailing. But his unconquerable spirit disdained all ideas of surrender, and the unequal conflict continued till this officer received a mortal wound; and no chance of escape being left, nor prospect of successful resistance remaining, the second in command sued for quarter; which was granted, and more than eight hundred men laid down their arms, about three hundred being killed or wounded in the action.

Defeat of major Ferguson at King's Mountain.

This disaster was in its consequences almost as fatal to lord Cornwallis as the affair of Trenton to general Howe. On the first intelligence of it his lordship retreated to Wynnesborough, where he was much harassed by the irregular but continual attacks of the provincials; and general Gates was enabled to write to the president of the congress, "The enemy have so far the worst of the campaign, having lost considerably more men, officers, and arms, than your army; and even lost ground, as they had se-

veral posts at the beginning of the campaign on the Pedee, all of which are now evacuated." But the exultation of the court-faction in England, on the intelligence of lord Cornwallis's victory at Camden, was extreme. Untaught by former disappointments, all the flattering and favorite ideas of absolute conquest and unconditional submission seemed for a time to be revived. "I have not the least doubt," said the American secretary of state to lord Cornwallis in his dispatch of November 9th, "from your lordship's vigorous and alert movements, that the whole country south of the Delawar will be restored to the king's obedience in the course of the next campaign;"—this credulous and confident statesman thinking, as is evident, that marching through the country was the same thing as subduing it. It is even probable that the animation inspired by this success contributed to the adoption of the violent counsels by which, at this period, matters were brought to the last extremity with the States General.

1780. Extravagant exultation of the court-faction in England.

On the 3d of September, the Mercury, a congress packet, was taken by the Vestal frigate off the banks of Newfoundland. On board this packet was Mr. Laurens, late president of the congress, charged with a commission to Holland. On being brought to England, he was examined by the privy council, and committed close prisoner to the Tower, on an accusation of high treason. His papers, which had been thrown overboard, and by great dexterity and

BOOK XIX. 1780.

diligence recovered and deciphered, were found to contain the sketch of a treaty of amity and commerce between the Republic of Holland and the States of America. This treaty appeared to be in a train of negotiation, and to have received the sanction and approbation of M. Van Berkel, counsellor and pensionary of Amsterdam. Such was the high offence taken by the court of London at this discovery, that immediate orders were transmitted to sir Joseph Yorke, to represent to the States General, that the States of Amsterdam, as appeared from the papers of the Sieur Laurens, calling himself president of the pretended congress, had entered into a clandestine correspondence with the American rebels, and that instructions and powers had been given by them for the purpose of concluding a treaty of indissoluble friendship with the said rebels. His Britannic majesty, therefore, required not only a formal disavowal of so irregular a conduct, but also insisted on speedy satisfaction adequate to the offence, and the exemplary punishment of the pensionary Van Berkel and his accomplices, as disturbers of the public peace and violators of the rights of nations; otherwise the king would be obliged to take such steps as became his dignity and the interests of his subjects. The States General, though they passed without difficulty resolutions of disavowal and inquiry, delaying to give a formal and explicit answer to this declaration, a second memorial was pre-

Rupture with Holland.

sented by sir Joseph Yorke on the 12th of December, in which the ambassador requires an immediate and satisfactory answer from the States. "The king," he says, "has never imagined that your High Mightinesses had approved of a treaty with his rebellious subjects. That had been raising the buckler on your part. But the offence has been committed by a city which makes a considerable part of the state, and it belongs to the sovereign power to punish and give satisfaction for it: and it will not be till the last extremity, in case of denial or silence, that the king will take them upon himself." The ambassador was now informed that the memorial would be taken *ad referendum* by the deputies of the respective provinces, according to the received custom and constitution of their government. This being regarded as a palpable evasion, the ambassador received orders immediately to leave the Hague, and a declaration of war was published against Holland on the 20th of December 1780. This was a measure totally unexpected on the part of the States General, who were ill-prepared for such a rupture. Before the departure of count Welderen, he delivered, by order of the States, a letter to lord Stormont, which his lordship returned unopened.

However unjust and indefensible had been the policy of the British government, the hostile conduct of the Dutch, apparently proceeding less from a spirit of generous attachment to the cause of vio-

BOOK XIX. 1780.

lated freedom than from a sordid and avaricious selfishness, had rendered them the objects of the national resentment and aversion. The declaration of war, therefore, which carried with it a resemblance of vigor and even of magnanimity, was received with a great share of approbation and applause. There were not, however, wanting those who, without any prejudice in favor of Holland, hesitated not to affirm that this last act of the British ministry filled up the measure of their iniquity and absurdity. "Where," said they, "could be the civil or political offence for the subjects of a foreign state to enter into provisional agreements with the Americans, which were not and could not be supposed valid till the recognition of American independence had taken place, and which, in the very language of the instrument itself, professed to be merely outlines of a treaty of commerce, such as *might be concluded hereafter*, between their High Mightinesses and the United States of America?" If to maintain an amicable intercourse of this indefinite nature with the Americans was criminal in the Dutch, Holland could be regarded in no other light than as a province of England. The king of England seemed not to recollect, that the subjects of the States General were not his subjects, or accountable to him for their actions. They further affirmed, that a provisional treaty or speculative project, for it was no more, of peace and amity

with America, did by no means necessarily imply enmity or ill-will to England:—that this treaty, whether it boded good or ill to England, had been already publicly and unreservedly disavowed by the Dutch government; and that nothing less than a direct and positive injury could, in the eye of reason, justify a denunciation of hostility.

As to the insolent requisition of exemplary punishment on the person of Van Berkel, who might, for any thing that appeared, be actuated by motives the most upright and patriotic, the king of England ought to have reflected, that the laws of England, in similar circumstances, would not have authorised him to have inflicted the slightest punishment on even the meanest of his subjects, who should have formed the plan of a mere contingent agreement with the revolted provinces of another power, to take effect only when their claim of sovereignty should be actually recognised, and when the conditions should be approved and ratified by the government to which alone they owed allegiance.

On the whole, it may safely be affirmed, that a more frivolous and invalid plea or pretext of national hostility has seldom been urged even by royal logicians. The folly of the measure also was no less obvious than its injustice: for, though Holland was attacked thus suddenly and unprepared, there could be no doubt but that she would, in a short time, become a potent accession to the strength of

BOOK XIX.

that formidable confederacy which seemed already to threaten the very existence of Britain.

1780. Dissolution of parliament.

The fourteenth parliament of Great Britain was dissolved by proclamation on the 1st of September.

Remarkable address of sir George Saville.

On the event of this dissolution, amidst the multiplicity of election advertisements usual on such occasions, a very remarkable address from sir George Saville, member for the county of York, to his constituents, was published, well deserving the notice of history, as exhibiting the sentiments not merely of that eminently distinguished patriot, but of all intelligent, reflecting, and disinterested persons, at this alarming period. In renewing the tender of his services, he confesses, that "it has not been without much serious consideration, and more than common hesitation, that he determined upon it. The satisfaction and honor," says this Aristides of Britain, "of attending your business have ever over-balanced the labor. But my attendance during the last parliament has been something worse than laborious—it has been discouraging, grievous, painful. Look back for a moment upon the things which have been done, or, being done, have been approved of by that body of which I have been a constituent part. In comparing the present with the past situation of public affairs, one consolation only remains, that of being able to assert that there has been no measure of all those that have proved so ruinous and fatal, which I have not, as an individual, resisted to the

utmost of my power:—a poor, barren, ineffectual negative is indeed all the claim I can plead to your favor; and truth obliges me to add, that I at length return to you with hardly a ray of hope of seeing any change in the miserable course of public calamities. On this melancholy day of account, in rendering up to you my trust, I deliver to you your share of a country maimed and weakened—its treasure lavished and misspent, its honors faded, and its conduct the laughing-stock of Europe;—our nation in a manner without allies or friends, except such as we have hired to destroy our fellow-subjects, and to ravage a country in which we once claimed an invaluable share.—Forbearing as well the forward promises as the superficial humbleness of phrase in use on these occasions, I make it a solemn duty to lay before you, without disguise or palliation, the present state of your concerns, as they appear to me, and the gloomy prospect which lies before us. Some have been accused of exaggerating the public misfortunes—nay, of having endeavoured to help forward the mischief, that they might afterwards raise discontents. I am willing to hope that neither my temper nor my situation in life will be thought naturally to urge me to promote misery, discord, or confusion, or to exult in the subversion of order, or the ruin of property. Trust not, however, to my report: reflect, compare, and judge for yourselves. But, under all these disheartening circum-

BOOK XIX. 1780.

BOOK XIX. 1780.

stances, I could yet entertain a cheerful hope, and undertake again the commission with alacrity as well as zeal, if I could see any effectual steps taken to remove the *original cause* of the mischief: THEN THERE WOULD BE A HOPE. Till the purity of the constituent body, and thereby that of the representative, be restored, THERE IS NONE. I look upon restoring election and representation in some degree—for I expect no miracles—to their original purity, to be that without which all other efforts will be vain and ridiculous."

For the accomplishment of this most important purpose, he concludes with expressing his earnest wish, "that whatever is thought of may be pursued with that true spirit of firmness and moderation which belongs to the cause of justice; and above all, that, by every means that can be devised, a good understanding and union may be insured amongst respectable men of all ranks and descriptions, who agree in the main principles of liberty, whatever differences may subsist in smaller points, or in matters not calling for immediate discussion."

Meeting of the new parliament, October 1780, Mr. Cornwall speaker.

At the meeting of the new parliament, (October 31, 1780) Mr. Cornwall was, for reasons which require no comment, chosen speaker of the house of commons in the room of sir Fletcher Norton, on a division of 203 voices to 134. The KING, in his opening speech, declared "his satisfaction in having an opportunity, by the recent election, of receiving

the most certain information of the disposition and *wishes of his people*, to which he was ALWAYS *inclined to pay the* UTMOST ATTENTION! He acknowledged the arduous situation of public affairs; but the late signal successes of his arms in Georgia and Carolina would, he trusted, have important consequences, in bringing the war to a happy conclusion."

An amendment to the address, consisting in the omission of several complimentary paragraphs, was moved in the house of commons by Mr. Thomas Grenville. The BLESSINGS of his majesty's reign being recognised in the proposed address, in high-flown terms, as inspiring sentiments of reverence and gratitude, Mr. Fox declared, "that in this part of the address he could not concur, as he was yet to learn what those BLESSINGS were. The present reign had been one continued tissue of disgrace, misfortune, and calamity. How long," he exclaimed, "shall the sacred shield of majesty be interposed for the protection of a weak administration! As to the honorable mention made of the late successes in America, and of the gallant officers by whom they had been obtained, he should answer that he would not concur in applauding his own brother, who was now serving in America, for any success he might obtain. He never had joined, and as long as he lived he never would join, in a vote of thanks to any officer whose laurels were gathered in the American

BOOK XIX. 1781.

war; for he regarded that war as the fountain-head of all the mischief and misery under which this country now labored: and he was well convinced that the ministerial prospects of success, however transiently flattering, would be closed in disappointment and delusion." The address, as originally moved, was at length carried by a majority of 69 voices; which, when compared with the majorities of former times, afforded some faint gleam of hope that better days were gradually, though slowly, approaching.

Nothing meriting specific notice passed in either house previous to the recess of parliament; but on the 25th of January, 1781, two days only after they had re-assembled, lord North delivered to the house of commons a message from the king, in which his majesty acquainted them, "that, during the recess of parliament, he had been obliged to direct letters of marque and general reprisal to be issued against the States General of the United Provinces. For the causes and motives of his conduct he referred to his public manifesto, which, with various other papers, he had ordered to be laid before the house." At the close of a long speech, justificatory of the late measures of government, lord North moved, "That an address be presented to his majesty, assuring him that the house would, with a firm and determined resolution, support the just and necessary war against Holland, for the maintenance of the honor of his crown, and the

1781. Debates on the declaration of war against Holland.

rights and interests of his people." This motion was seconded by lord Lewisham; but it was not carried without a long and animated debate, in which Mr. Thomas Townshend, afterwards created Lord Sydney, particularly distinguished himself. He severely censured "the late long adjournment, which was only calculated to free the executive government from the control and inspection of parliament, who had now only to ratify what the rashness of ministers had most unadvisedly done. In this manner had the house been led into the American war, that fatal source of all our calamities. In this manner had the French rescript been announced; and afterwards the Spanish rescript; and at length the declaration of war against Holland, our antient and natural ally. Year after year had the minister acquainted the house with a new enemy, but never had he yet brought them the welcome information of a new friend. Much had been said of the provocations we had received from Holland, and the predominance of a French interest in that country—but had Holland received no provocation from us? The insolence of the British memorial presented to the States in 1777, contributed more than any thing else to the prevalence of the French faction in Holland. It had been stated, as a serious ground of offence, that Holland had not complied with the requisition of troops, which by treaty she had engaged to furnish. But it was notorious that, in the event

BOOK XIX. 1781.

of this compliance, Holland would have been immediately invaded by France; and, in conformity with the same treaties, we must then have sent a much greater aid to the assistance of the republic. If the Dutch at the present period had changed their political system respecting this country, it was owing to the criminal conduct of an administration who had precipitated us into a war whence all our misfortunes had arisen. In consequence of that war our American commerce was lost; and could it be a matter of surprise that the Dutch, a people who existed by commerce, should be desirous to secure a share of it? We were abandoned, not by the Dutch only, but by all the powers of Europe, who were all equally convinced that, under the present wretched administration of affairs, whoever became the ally of Great Britain would only share in her disgrace and her misfortunes."

In the house of lords, the duke of Richmond, lord Shelburne, and lord Camden, inculcated the same ideas with great animation and ability. "As to what was called *the treaty* between Holland and America," lord Camden said, "it was the mere unauthorised act of Van Berkel, and betrayed neither directly nor indirectly any intention in the States General of a hostile nature. It did not even appear that they knew any thing of this man or his colleagues; and much less that they had determined to ratify this pretended treaty, or project of a

treaty, by which no one was bound, and no one could be injured."

His lordship contrasted the conduct of the present ministers to the States General with that of lord Chatham, who, in the zenith of his victories, had never deviated from the line of respect and moderation. "He was too wise and magnanimous, whatever might be the causes of complaint, to adopt the style and language of that provoking, arrogant, and indecent memorial, to which, more than to any other circumstance whatever, the subsequent conduct of the republic might be attributed *. His lordship was of opinion that the manifesto against Holland ought not to receive the sanction of their lordships, till stronger evidence were produced of the necessity, justice, and policy, of that measure: and if no better grounds of hostility should be the result of a more particular inquiry, parliament would be bound to order immediate reparation and satisfaction to be given for the injury already sustained by Holland; and an end would be of course put to the further prosecution of hostilities."

In both houses, nevertheless, the addresses were carried by great majorities; but the dissentient peers recorded their objections in a strong and vigorous

* The allusion is to the famous memorial of February 21, 1777, presented by sir Joseph Yorke to the States General, relative to the conduct of the governor of St. Eustatia, M. Van Graaf.

BOOK XIX. 1781.

protest. Their lordships declare, "that they can never believe a rupture so contrary to the uniform and approved policy of our ablest statesmen can have become necessary, on our part, without gross mismanagement in our councils; and that honest and able ministers might have prevented *this*, amongst other wretched consequences of the unfortunate American war." The States General themselves, in their counter-memorial, affirm, "that the plan or project of a treaty with America, which had excited to such a degree the displeasure of the king of England, although it depended altogether on the anterior recognition of American independence, had been, however, without hesitation disavowed by them. But the punishment insisted upon was not within their power, and they could not assent to it without striking at the root of the fundamental constitution of the state. That, obliged by what is held most sacred to defend the rights and privileges of their subjects, the republic could not forget itself so far as to submit to the will of his Britannic majesty, by attempting to overturn those rights and privileges, and exceeding the limits prescribed by the fundamental laws of its government. Those laws required the intervention of the judicial department, and those were the means which the States of Holland, to whose peculiar cognizance it belonged, had resolved to use, by requiring on this subject the advice of the court of

justice established in their province. Of this the chevalier Yorke had been formally apprised:—but what was the astonishment of their High Mightinesses, when the said ambassador, calling the said resolve *illusive*, flatly refused to transmit it to his court! This obliged their High Mightinesses to send it to count Welderen, their minister in London, with orders to lay it before his Britannic majesty, whose ministers had nevertheless returned it unopened to the ambassador. BOOK XIX. 1781.

The war, thus rashly and haughtily commenced, was conducted in the bitter spirit of animosity and revenge*. But before the military operations of the year are entered upon, it will be proper to ter-

* It is a remarkable fact, positively affirmed by Rendorp, burgomaster of Amsterdam, in a political publication, called *Memorien dienende tot Opheldering*, and still uncontradicted, that sir Joseph Yorke, when he left the Hague, went to Antwerp, and instigated the inhabitants of that city to petition the emperor to insist upon the free navigation of the Scheldt. And it is notorious, that when this demand was, some years afterwards, actually made by the emperor, England, far from taking any alarm, looked on with calm indifference, or rather with pleasure. But when the same thing was, more recently, attempted by France, the balance of Europe was discovered to be in imminent danger of subversion: and England and Holland were, by the violence of men disdaining all explanation and concession, plunged into a most ruinous and destructive war, under the pretext of defending the violated rights of the Treaty of Westphalia.

BOOK XIX.

minate the civil and parliamentary history of the present session.

1781. Reform bill of Mr. Burke revived, and again rejected.

The famous Reform Bill of Mr. Burke was revived soon after the recess: but, on the motion for the second reading, it was rejected *in toto*, by a majority of 233 voices to 190; though ably and powerfully supported by many of the most eminent members of the house.

Amongst the speeches which attracted most strongly the public attention, was that delivered with much grace and energy by Mr. William Pitt, second son of the late earl of Chatham, who in very early youth had been elected a member of the present parliament, and who now exhibited himself to an admiring nation as equally the heir of his talents and virtues. "One great object," Mr. Pitt said, "of all the petitions which had been presented, was a recommendation of œconomy in the public expenditure; and the design of the present bill was, to carry into effect the wishes of the people, by introducing a substantial system of œconomy. Besides the benefits which would result from the bill in this respect, it had another object still more important, and that was the reduction of the influence of the crown—an influence which was the more to be dreaded, because more secret in its attacks, and more concealed in its operations, than the power of prerogative." Mr. Pitt adverted to the extraordinary objections which had been made to the bill; it pro-

posed to bring no more than 200,000*l.* per annum into the public coffers, and that sum was insignificant, in comparison of the millions annually expended. "What then is the conclusion we are left to deduce? The calamities of the present crisis are too great to be benefited by œconomy. Our expences are so enormous, that it is useless to give ourselves any concern about them; we have spent and are spending so much, that it is foolish to think of saving any thing. Such is the language which the opponents of this bill have virtually employed. It had also been said, that the king's civil list was an irresumable parliamentary grant, and it had been even compared to a private freehold. The weakness of such arguments was their best refutation. The civil list revenue was granted to his majesty not for his private use, but for the support of the executive government of the state. His majesty, in fact, was the trustee of the public, subject to parliamentary revision. The parliament made the grant, and undoubtedly had a right to resume it when the pressure of the times rendered such resumption necessary. Upon the whole, he considered the present bill as essential to the being and independence of this country, and he would give it his most determined support."

Corrupt and extravagant loan of lord North.

Early in March, the minister, lord North, brought forward the annual statement of the public account. The entire expenditure of the year his lordship cal-

BOOK XIX. 1781.

culated at twenty-one millions, – twelve of which it would be necessary to raise by a public loan: as to the terms of which, his lordship had contracted with the subscribers, to grant 150*l.* capital stock at three per cent. and 25*l.* capital stock at four per cent. for every 100*l.* in money; thus creating a new capital of eighteen millions three per cent. and three millions four per cent., being nine millions more than the sum actually paid into the Exchequer. To defray the interest of this loan, new taxes would be wanting to the amount of 660,000*l.* annually, i. e. 60,000*l.* more than the legal established interest of five per cent.: exclusive of which, as the subscription to the loan bore an immediate premium of ten per cent., the further sum of 1,200,000*l.* was lost to the nation. The terms of this extraordinary contract were, even by several of the friends of the minister, declared to be extravagantly high; and it was by Mr. Fox reprobated in the most indignant expressions of severity, as "the most corrupt in its origin, the most shameful in its progress, and the most injurious in its consequences, that ever came under the contemplation of that house. In order to carry on a wicked, impolitic, and bloody war, the minister would not scruple," said this formidable speaker, "to extort the last guinea from the pockets of the people. The noble lord stands convicted of having made, in the character of agent and trustee for the nation, an improvident, scandalous, and profligate bargain, for

which he deserves public execration and exemplary punishment." On a division, the motion of the minister was carried by a majority of 169 to 111 voices.

In the house of lords it was again vigorously opposed by lord Rockingham, the duke of Portland, and other peers, who, in a joint protest, recorded their names, to adopt the language of their lordships, "in testimony of their strongest condemnation of the terms of this loan, and of the MOTIVES which they conceive dictated terms so very disadvantageous to the crown and nation." All the influence and all the activity of the ministers of the crown were now indeed obviously necessary to prevent a parliamentary abandonment of the present system. Some weeks afterwards, the subject was again revived in the house of commons, by a motion of sir George Saville, that a select committee be appointed, to inquire into the circumstances of the last loan, to make an estimate of its terms, and report the same to the house. "Though the bargain of the minister had been irrevocably ratified by the house, this distinguished patriot observed, that it was not yet too late, on discovering the shameless prodigality of the terms on which it was concluded, to pass a vote of censure, or even of impeachment, on the man who had sacrificed the public in so gross and daring a manner." This gave rise to a vehement debate, at the conclusion of which the motion was rejected by a majority of 46 only, in a house consisting of 377 members.

BOOK XIX. 1781.

And thus were the loud calls of the nation, for an œconomical reform in the public expenditure, set at contemptuous defiance by the unprincipled effrontery of the ministers.

Pacificatory motion of Mr. Fox.

Towards the end of the session, Mr. Fox moved the house, to resolve itself into a committee, to consider of the American war, for the purpose of devising some means of accommodation. This motion was supported in an animated speech by Mr. Pitt, who expressed his utter abhorrence of a war, "which was conceived," he said, "in injustice, nurtured in folly, and whose footsteps were marked with slaughter and devastation. It exhibited the height of moral depravity and human turpitude. The nation was drained of its best blood and its vital resources, for which nothing was received in return but a series of inefficient victories or disgraceful defeats,—victories obtained over men struggling in the holy cause of liberty,—or defeats which filled the land with mourning for the loss of dear and valuable relatives slain in a detested and impious quarrel." The motion was rejected by a majority of 172 to 99 voices.

On the 18th of July 1781 the session was closed by a speech, in which his majesty observed that the great efforts made by the nation to surmount the difficulties of the present arduous and complicated war, must convince the world that the antient spirit of the British nation was not abated or diminished, and he was resolved to accept of no terms or conditions of

peace than such as might consist with the honor and dignity of his crown, and the permanent interests and security of his people. BOOK XIX. 1781.

A very considerable proportion of the present session was occupied in the consideration of the affairs of India, of which the interval between the civil and military transactions of the present year affords a proper opportunity to take a general review, from the period in which the memorable bill of regulation framed by the minister lord North, A. D. 1773, passed into a law.

In the month of April 1772, took place, in consequence of the removal of governor Cartier, the memorable appointment of Warren Hastings, esq. as governor-general of India; a man whose conduct throughout all the inferior gradations of office stood confessedly unimpeached*. The members of the Supreme Council appointed under the new act were, sir John Clavering, colonel Monson, and Philip Review of the administration of Mr. Hastings in India.

* When lord Clive embarked for Europe, February 1760, he left the government in the hands of Mr. Holwell *pro tempore*; Mr. Vansittart being then actually appointed, and arriving at Calcutta in the month of July. Mr. Vansittart remained in Bengal till the beginning of 1764, and was succeeded by Mr. Spencer, who was quickly superseded by lord Clive. On the second resignation of lord Clive, Mr. Verelst was advanced, January 1767, to the government of Bengal. To him succeeded, December 1769, Mr. Cartier. Both these gentlemen entered into the views, and acted upon the system

BOOK XIX. 1781.

Francis, esq. than whom persons of more inflexible probity and enlightened beneficence could not have been selected by the wisdom of parliament, for the purpose of stemming that tide of corruption and rapacity which inundated the government of India throughout all its departments and ramifications; and which, when opportunities are frequent and temptations forcible, shall cease to overleap the mounds of right when the Ganges shall cease to flow. It is remarkable, that these three gentlemen were impressed with so high an idea of the merits of Mr. Hastings, upon whose powerful aid and local experience they depended to give efficacy to their exertions in the public service, that sir John Clavering, with the approbation of his co-adjutors, had actually addressed the king, previous to their departure from England, to bestow upon the governor some distinguished mark of his royal favor, with a view to induce him to relinquish the intention which he was supposed to entertain of resigning the government.

established by lord Clive. At length the Sullivan party prevailing in the direction, Mr. Hastings was, in opposition to the influence of his lordship, appointed governor of Bengal: and the more secret transactions, with the concomitant intrigues and cabals, which distinguished his administration, can be perfectly understood only by those who have wasted their time in developing the complex and clashing interests, and never-ceasing contentions and animosities, of the Clive and Sullivan factions.

On the arrival of the new counsellors in India, in the autumn of 1774, their astonishment was great to find the whole system and policy of Mr. Hastings diametrically contrary to their pre-conceived ideas of his character. His manners also were marked by a coldness and *hauteur* wholly incompatible with the cordiality of friendship; and they had the chagrin to perceive, that they were regarded by him not as associates in the great and necessary work of reform, but in the odious light of detectors, spies, and rivals. The project so universally and justly execrated in England, of setting up the lands of the zemindars, polygars, &c. to public auction, appeared, from the immediate and unqualified adoption of this odious system by the new governor, to be the favorite policy of Mr. Hastings himself. In the space of about 200 years, during which the kingdom of Bengal and its appendages had been under the Mahomedan government, the original ground-rents or heriots, *aussil jumma*, of the zemindars and other great hereditary landholders who held under the government, had never been raised: and a permanent interest being thus created in the land, the talookdars and ryots, who possessed the subordinate rights of property under the zemindars, were neither themselves oppressed, nor allowed to oppress the actual occupants and cultivators of the soil. But from the fatal period that Bengal fell into the hands of the English, the security of property was no more. In

BOOK XIX. 1784.

BOOK XIX. 1781.

fail to prove to individuals in certain situations an exhaustless source of wealth. The court of directors declared themselves, in the sequel, "fully aware of the duplicity which had been practised in the letting of the lands in Bengal; that flagrant corruption and great oppressions had been committed;" and they ordered a prosecution to be commenced against the persons who composed the Committee of Circuit. But after long and studied delays, Mr. Hastings ultimately proposed, and carried his proposition in council, "that orders should be given for withdrawing the said prosecution." It is worthy of remark, that the *banyan* or black steward of Mr. Hastings, Cantoo Baboo, rented, under the new tenure, lands to the value of 150,000*l.* per annum; and remissions to a very great amount were granted to this man, as well as to all those whose reasons appeared to the governor and council equally valid. The zemindary of Baharbund, taken from the rannee of Radshi, was also given in perpetuity to Cantoo Baboo, at a rent of 82,000 rupees, although the value of it was rated at 350,000. The same Cantoo Baboo was also permitted to contract largely for the provision of the Company's investments; "but this," the court of directors, in their general letter of December 1776, say, "we positively forbid in future."

The astonishment into which sir John Clavering and his colleagues were thrown, on being apprised

of this extraordinary state of things in Bengal, was much increased by the alarming information of a war, into which the governor-general had recently entered, in conjunction with the vizier Sujah ul Dowla, nabob of Oude, for the absolute conquest and EXTIRPATION of the nation of the Rohillas, inhabiting the fertile and beautiful province of Rohilcund, situated to the northward of the dominions of the vizier, and bounded by the high range of mountains dividing Hindostan from Tartary. It was not pretended by Mr. Hastings, that the Company had received any injury whatever from the Rohilla nation; but that we engaged in the war solely as allies of the nabob vizier. The causes or pretexts of the quarrel, with respect to the vizier himself, were of a nature, to say the best, very doubtful and ambiguous. The Rohilla nation, being involved in hostilities with the Mahrattas, had applied to the vizier for assistance, who agreed to furnish them with a large body of troops for an equivalent in money. But, through the dilatory, or perhaps insidious, policy of the vizier, the auxiliary troops, as the Rohillas alleged, did not arrive till the enemy were repulsed. The Rohilla government, therefore, objected to the payment of the promised stipend; on which the vizier, with the previous and eager concurrence of Mr. Hastings, determined to declare war against the

BOOK XIX. 1781.

Rohillas *, a brave, free, and generous people, for the purpose of adding so desirable a territory to his dominions. The Rohillas, in the highest degree alarmed at this confederacy, offered to submit the whole cause of dispute to the arbitration of the English; but this was peremptorily refused by Mr. Hastings, who urged the vizier, already wavering in his purpose, in strong terms to the execution of his design, declaring to him, "that it would be absolutely necessary to persevere in it until it should be accomplished; and that he could not hazard or answer for the displeasure of the Company, if they should find themselves engaged in a fruitless war, or in a ruinous expence for prosecuting it." This apprehension was founded on very reasonable grounds; for the court of directors, in their instructions to the supreme council, had laid it down as an unalterable maxim, "that they were to avoid

* This is the Rohilla statement of the case. Nevertheless it must be acknowledged that sir Robert Barker and the other officers employed in this expedition strongly attest the performance of the service contracted for by the vizier, in their respective examinations at the bar of the house of commons. But if the object of the Rohilla war had been merely the recovery of a sum of money, whether justly or unjustly claimed, it would, in a moral and political view, have been a trifle light as air, and spotless as innocence, in comparison of that "blackness of darkness" in which it is now enveloped.

taking part in the political schemes of any of the country princes, *particularly* of the nabob of Oude, of whose ambitious disposition they were well apprised." A considerable body of troops under colonel Champion, being detached to the aid of the vizier, entered the province of Rohilcund, and a pitched battle took place, in which Hafiz Rhamet, the principal leader of the Rohillas, and many other of their chieftains, were slain. The whole country, described as "a garden not having one spot in it of uncultivated ground," was, in consequence of this victory, converted into a frightful waste, and in a great measure depopulated, either by the rigors of military execution, or by forcing the wretched inhabitants beyond the mountains, to wander and perish in the Tartarian deserts. For this service, the vizier had agreed to pay into the treasury of Calcutta the sum of forty lacks of rupees; and Mr. Hastings, in vindication of his conduct, alleged, and in his subsequent memorable PARLIAMENTARY DEFENCE entered upon record, the following very extraordinary reasons: "The acquisition of this sum to the Company, and of so much specie added to the exhausted currency of our provinces; that it would give wealth to the nabob of Oude, of which we should participate; that he should be always ready to profess, that he did reckon the probable acquisition of wealth among his reasons for taking up arms against his neighbours; that it

BOOK XIX. 1781.

BOOK XIX. 1781.

would ease the Company of a considerable part of their military expence, and preserve their troops from inactivity and relaxation of discipline; that the Rohillas are not a *nation*, but a body of foreign adventurers, who had made a conquest of the country about sixty years before; that this province would be a most commodious acquisition, and the weakness of the Rohillas, with the open and defenceless state of the country, promised an easy conquest; and finally, that such was his idea of the Company's distress at home, added to his knowledge of their wants abroad, that he should have been glad of *any occasion* to employ their forces which saved so much of their pay and expences." The principal of the Rohilla chieftains, who escaped from the decisive battle of St. George, was Fyzoola Khan, who retired to a remote part of the country with his treasures and the shattered remains of the Rohilla army; and after the death of Hafiz, renowned for the superiority of his intellectual talents and personal accomplishments, Fyzoola Khan was very generally acknowledged as the head of this unfortunate and devoted nation. Finding his utter inability to continue the war, he sued in very submissive terms for peace; which the vizier, through the intercession of colonel Champion, thought proper to grant; and a treaty was accordingly signed at Lall-Dang, October 1774, agreeably to which Fyzoola Khan was confirmed in the possession of Rampore,

Shawabad, and some adjoining districts; on condition of giving up half his treasure, and of furnishing a certain stipulated quota of troops when called upon. This indulgence was, however, little to the satisfaction of Mr. Hastings, who had previously declared, with respect to Fyzoola Khan, "that he appeared not to merit *any* consideration. The petty sovereign of a country estimated at six or eight lacks, ought not *for a moment* to prove an impediment to any of our measures, or to affect the CONSISTENCY of our conduct." 1781.

The anxiety with which Mr. Hastings endeavoured, by every means in his power, to prevent the vizier from acceding to equitable terms of accommodation with the nabob Fyzoola Khan, is indeed very remarkable. This prince, as possessor of the dependent districts of Rampore and Shawabad, had been reluctantly forced into the war, and made early overtures for peace after the fatal battle of St. George. These advances met with a very favorable acceptance from colonel Champion, who declared, in his letter of the 28th of May 1774, to Mr. Hastings, "that he wished for nothing so much as for the adoption of some measure that might strike all the powers of the East with admiration of our justice, in contrast to the conduct of the vizier." In this instance, however, the vizier himself appears to have lent no unwilling ear to the solicitations of colonel Champion in favor of a man, who,

BOOK XIX. 1781.

to use his own words, "had never acted in such a manner as for the vizier to have taken hatred to his heart against him"—whose general character was eminently mild and blameless, and whose innocence with respect to the origin of the war Mr. Hastings himself did not pretend to question. Nevertheless, in reply to colonel Champion's letter, the governor-general did not scruple to affirm, "that, instead of soliciting the vizier to relinquish his conquest of Fyzoola Khan, every argument should be used to dissuade him from such an intention, and that it was his desire that colonel Champion would discourage it as much as was in his power." In the month of September following, Mr. Hastings, in contradiction to this declaration, thought proper, in conjunction with the select committee of council, to express to colonel Champion "their satisfaction at the vizier's intentions of terminating the war by an accommodation with the Rohillas, and hoping that his excellency would be disposed to conciliate their affections to his government by acceding to lenient terms." But in a very few days after the date of this dispatch, he with the grossest duplicity transmitted a private letter to colonel Champion, signifying "his hope and expectation that the commander in chief had resolved to prosecute the war to a final issue, because it was plain that Fyzoola Khan and his adherents lay at his mercy; adding, that he apprehended much inconvenience from de-

lays, and was morally certain that no good would be gained by negotiating. He therefore wished that the vizier would lose no time in seeking for an accommodation. Happily, before the receipt of this letter, the treaty between the vizier and the nabob was concluded, through the beneficent and efficacious interposition of colonel Champion, who himself signed and sealed the treaty as a witness thereto. But though, in relation to the former treaty, supposed to be violated by the Rohillas, sir Robert Barker's signature was pronounced by Mr. Hastings to be equivalent to a formal and explicit guarantee, he in the sequel took upon him positively to deny, as to that in question, "that colonel Champion did thereby engage the United Company to guaranty the same, or that he was invested with power so to do*." And a large sum was ultimately obtained, or more properly extorted, from the nabob Fyzoola Khan, as a compensation for the Company's guarantee. Such and so palpable appears the inconsistency of Mr. Hastings's language and conduct!

The Rohilla war was subsequently condemned, in decisive terms, by a formal resolution of the court of directors, passed November 1775, "as contrary to the express and repeated orders of the court, and inconsistent with the principles both of policy and justice;" and this resolve was, with the

* Vide Mr. Hastings's "Defence."

BOOK XIX. 1781.

singularly complaisant omission of the censure of injustice, confirmed by a vote of the court of proprietors.

But this extraordinary transaction, ranking among the first and most important acts of Mr. Hastings's administration, and affording a decisive and infallible criterion of its general tenor and spirit, demands a yet further and more distinct investigation. After the conquest of Bengal, the Company at home seemed fully satisfied with the extent of their acquisitions; and the dispatches of the court of directors were from that period filled with rigorous injunctions to avoid all offensive wars, in which they appear with good reason perpetually apprehensive that the ambition, temerity, and avarice of their servants in INDIA would involve them. Nevertheless, at the distance of half the globe from the scene of action, it was impossible not to allow in the execution of their orders some latitude of discretion. "The situation of affairs," say they, in their general letter of the 30th of June 1769, "may be varied by unforeseen events at the very moment we are writing:— whenever you think yourselves OBLIGED, for our SECURITY, upon EMERGENT OCCASIONS, to adopt measures of a contrary, i. e. hostile tendency, you are to give us very full reasons for such deviation." In another letter they say, "You must undoubtedly act according to the EMERGENCY of affairs:" and again in another dispatch, "As we

know not what alliances may be formed to justify us in carrying our arms beyond the bounds of the provinces, we are prevented from proposing any PRECISE PLAN for your guidance in this respect."

These necessary though reluctant concessions on the part of the directors, Mr. Hastings in his MINUTES of DEFENCE preposterously perverts into a justification of the Rohilla war; although the Rohillas were notoriously as unwilling as they were unable to do any injury to the Company. The real grounds of the war appeared from the first sufficiently obvious. The pretext held out was, that the vizier, as an ally of the Company, was entitled to our assistance; and that, as *guarantees* of the treaty between him and the Rohilla chiefs, we were bound to grant it. Without adverting to the justice or injustice of the vizier's demand on the Rohillas, it is enough to say, that this pretended guarantee consisted only in the treaty being signed at the request of the Rohillas themselves, from their well-grounded distrust of the vizier, in the *presence* of sir Robert Barker, commander-in-chief of the Company's forces, as a witness of the same. It is not pretended that sir Robert Barker had authority to pledge the Company as guarantees of the treaty: and that he should take upon him to bind the government by so serious and important an act, without special instruction and direction, is an incredible supposition: and in fact, sir Robert Barker,

BOOK XIX. 1781.

being interrogated at the bar of the house of commons—"Whether he conceived that he had by any act of his bound the Company to a guarantee of the treaty by war?" answered positively, "I DID NOT." Also in a letter written even before the actual conclusion of the treaty, he declares, "that it was the farthest from his intention that the Company should in any respect whatever be mentioned in the agreement between the vizier and the Rohillas."

From the first suggestion of this project of conquest and extirpation by the vizier, *if indeed the vizier were the original projector*, it is evident that Mr. Hastings urged its prosecution with an ardor far superior to that discovered by the nabob, whose ambition was counteracted by his avarice, and who on cool reflection appears to have thought the prize scarcely worth the purchase. "I availed myself," says Mr. Hastings, "of his eager solicitude for the attainment of this point, to engage his assent to another measure of much greater value to the Company—that is to say, the increase of his annual payments or subsidy to the amount of two hundred and ten thousand rupees per month." But it is sufficiently evident, that when this concession was once extorted from the vizier, his "eager solicitude" subsided into a state of mind which the artifices of Mr. Hastings only prevented from sinking into coldness and indifference: and when Mr. Hastings af-

firms, "that this war derived its *propriety* from circumstances of nice relation and various detail *, he undoubtedly confounds its *propriety* with its *existence*.

In a letter written by Mr. Hastings to the vizier, April 21, 1773, he enlarges on the great advantage which would result to the vizier from the reduction of the Rohilla country, "because," says he, "by that means the defensive line of your dominions would be completed, by including within it all the land lying on that side of the river Ganges."—"The ALLUREMENT (to adopt the language of Mr. Hastings in his Defence) thus held out to the vizier succeeded. He proposed in reply a meeting with me at Benares. I found him still equally bent on the design of reducing the Rohillas, which I ENCOURAGED as I had before done, by dwelling

* MINUTES of DEFENCE.—It is pleasant enough, when inquiry is made into the causes of a war, the object of which is the extirpation of a nation, to be told, "that it derives its propriety from circumstances of nice relation and various detail." The causes of such a war, justice and humanity out of the question, must, upon any solid ground of mere policy, be obvious and important. And it must be confessed, that the causes enumerated by Mr. Hastings in his defence are extremely clear and intelligible. "The circumstances of nice relation and various detail," therefore, are to be referred merely and solely to the impositions and artifices by which the vizier was inveigled into this nefarious undertaking against the Rohillas.

BOOK XIX. 1781.

on the advantages which he would derive from its success; by objecting with great force the ORDERS of the COMPANY restricting us from such remote schemes of conquest, to which I therefore could not assent without such conditions obtained in return for it as might obviate their displeasure, and win their sanction to so hazardous and UNAUTHORISED a measure. Having at length obtained this point, viz. *the increase of the subsidy*, I easily yielded my *assent* to the Rohilla plan, i. e. to the plan which the vizier had been thus *allured* and *encouraged* to undertake, on the stipulation of forty lacks for its accomplishment. As a precaution against any effects which were to be apprehended *from the vizier's* IRRESOLUTION, the conditions originally accepted were dictated to him in the form of a letter, to be written by him, in which a clause was inserted, 'that whether the country was conquered, or a peace concluded between him and the enemy, the stipulation for the forty lacks should become EQUALLY DUE.' Thus at last," says Mr. Hastings exultingly, "an occasion took place, when, by a *slight deviation* from the defensive plan, our alliance with the vizier might be converted into solid advantages. In effect, the same reasons which before urged us to shun every military expedition now operated in the contrary direction, and recommended the employment of our army for the pur-

pose of REDUCING our EXPENCES, and ADDING to our CURRENCY." BOOK XIX. 1781.

Surely the public accusers of Mr. Hastings would not wish to heighten the colors of the picture he has here drawn of himself! As to the mode in which this WAR of EXTIRPATION, or, to use that more soft and gentle phraseology which gives a specious gloss to deeds of the blackest villany, "this slight deviation from the general plan of defence," was conducted, we are well assured that colonel Champion never mentioned the service on which he was employed without the deepest expressions of grief and abhorrence. "Whilst all ASIA knows," says this commander, "that the English gave him (i. e. the nabob vizier) the rod, will they not reasonably conclude that the scourges which the agent gives are connived at?—will they not say every English chief is another Sujah?"—"The authority given to the vizier over the army," says the colonel in a letter to Mr. Hastings, dated May 10, 1774, "has totally absorbed that degree of consequence due to my station. My hands have been tied up from giving protection or asylum to the miserable. I have been obliged to give a deaf ear to the lamentable cries of the widow and the fatherless, and shut my eyes against a wanton display of violence and oppression, of inhumanity and cruelty. The Company's interest constrained me in public to stifle the work-

BOOK XIX. 1781.

ings of my feelings, but I *must* give way to them in private—it would affect your SENSIBILITY too much were I to descend to particulars. The family of Hafiz, the Begums included, have been driven to the necessity of making supplications for a little rice and water; and of the prisoners, many have died for want of sustenance. I wish to leave scenes which none but the merciless Sujah can bear without heart-bleeding pain—relieve me therefore as soon as possible."

In a moving representation to the colonel from the sons of Hafiz, of their manifold distresses, they say of the vizier, "He has deprived us of our country, of our riches, and even of our honor; and, not satisfied with that, he is going to send us prisoners to Fyzabad. We desire no country, no riches, no palaces; but at Bissoulee are the tombs of our ancestors—near them, under some shade, we beg permission to spend the remainder of our days as faquiers." These things the colonel says he is compelled to state, although the ungracious reception of his former representations gave him but little encouragement to plead the cause of the unhappy.

In a subsequent letter, dated June 15, 1774, the colonel desires that he may be empowered to withdraw the English troops, in case the vizier will not otherwise be prevailed upon to desist from his enormities; but this Mr. Hastings, in his reply, declares

to be "obviously inadmissible. Where (said he) is our authority to judge or control the conduct of the vizier, further than respects his engagement with us? Even granting we had an authority to control the vizier's conduct in the manner you propose, we must have demonstration of the *infallibility* of the person we intrusted with such an authority, before we could be vindicated in the delegation of it. All the country subdued becomes absolutely the vizier's. On the terms you propose, the English commander would supersede his authority in the government of his new possessions." In lieu therefore of the expedient suggested by the good sense and humanity of colonel Champion, the governor-general ordered his resident, Mr. Middleton, in whom fortunately no "demonstration of infallibility" was required, to *remonstrate* and *expostulate* with the vizier concerning his conduct towards the Rohillas, "in order to exculpate the English government from the IMPUTATION, as Mr. Hastings well expresses it, of assenting to such a procedure." But so little did the vizier regard these feeble and formal remonstrances, that in the sequel the family of Hafiz, after suffering the most dreadful and shocking indignities, were carried in captivity to Fyzabad.

In a subsequent letter from the nabob Mahub Ulla Khan, the eldest son of Hafiz, he most earnestly supplicates, in the name of GOD and Christ, the

BOOK XIX. 1781.

interposition of the English commander for their release. "O my guardian," says he, "turn your face to the business of a slave, and have us enlarged, and it will not go unrewarded." As to the extravagant plea set up by Mr. Hastings in defence of this most infamous and unprovoked invasion, "that the Rohillas were not a nation, but a body of foreign adventurers, who possessed the country by a prescription of *only* sixty years," it is surely sufficient to reply, that the inhabitants of Rohilcund under their present government enjoyed peace and prosperity—that these people, whom he will not allow to be a nation, were able to bring an army of fifty or sixty thousand men into the field; and that it might with infinitely more force be retorted on the English themselves, that THEY were a body of "foreign adventurers," who had been at this time scarcely seven summers in possession of the country they occupied *. With equal feeling and animation it has been said in relation to the general merits of the Rohilla war, "There is no power in this world that can annihilate such a question—THOUGH IT WERE DEAD, YET SHALL IT LIVE.

* Numidæ et de terminatione Scipionis mentiri eos arguebant; et si quis veram originem juris exigere vellet quem proprium agrum Carthaginiensium in Africa esse? Advenis quantum secto bovis tergo amplecti loci potuerint tantum ad urbem communiendam precario datum quicquid Byrsam sedem suam excesserint *vi*, atque *injuriâ* partum habere.—*Liv.* lib. xxxiv. § 62.

"The cause by its own energy shall turn upon the force that oppresses it, and sting to destruction the vulnerable heel that endeavours to keep it down."

Another very important transaction, of which the new counsellors were also for the first time apprised at their arrival in India, left no room for doubt, if doubt could otherwise have subsisted, as to the real character and systematic policy of the governor-general. In the solemn treaty of peace concluded August 1765 at Illahabad, between the nabob vizier of Oude and the East India Company, it is stipulated that the emperor Sha Allum shall remain, under the guarantee of the Company, in full possession of the provinces of Corah and Illahabad, as a royal demesne; in consideration of which the *dewannee* of Bengal was granted by the emperor in perpetuity to the Company.

About the year 1772, the emperor, who had hitherto resided at Illahabad, removed to the antient capital of Dehli; but engaging soon after this period in unsuccessful hostilities with the Mahrattas, this people compelled him while in their power to grant *sunnuds* for the surrender of Corah and Illahabad to them. But Mr. Hastings, in his letter of March 1773 to the court of directors, says, "In no shape can this compulsatory cession by the KING release us from the obligation we are under to defend

BOOK XIX. 1781.

the provinces which we have so particularly guaranteed to him;" and they were accordingly occupied by the troops of the Company, and taken under its immediate and avowed protection. In a short time, however, the ideas of Mr. Hastings suffered a total change; for by an act of the governor and council, passed in *June following*, the engagements between the Company and the emperor are declared to be DISSOLVED by his alienation from them and their interests, manifested by his removal to Dehli. Nevertheless, "if the KING should make overtures to renew his former connection, his right to reclaim the districts of Corah and Illahabad could not, say they, be disputed; and the governor is authorised to restore them to him, on condition that he should RENOUNCE his CLAIM to the ANNUAL TRIBUTE of twenty-six lacks of rupees, reserved to the emperor out of the revenues of Bengal, and to the arrears which might be due." Yet in the treaty concluded in person by the governor-general with the vizier, in *September* 1773, it is asserted, "that his majesty, having abandoned the districts of Corah and Illahabad, and given a *sunnud* for Corah and Currah to the Mahrattas, had thereby *forfeited* his right to the said districts." And in his subsequent report of this interview and negotiation with Sujah ul Dowla, the governor declared, "that the administration would have been culpable in the

highest degree for retaining possession of Corah and Illahabad for any other purpose than that of making an advantage by the disposal of them, and therefore he had ceded them to the vizier for fifty lacks of rupees—the net annual revenue of these provinces being estimated at twenty-five lacks." At the same time the governor and council determined to withhold the tribute of twenty-six lacks of rupees from the emperor, pretending "that they were not satisfied of his amicable intentions, and that the reduced state of the treasury rendered such payment impracticable."

Such was the treatment which the emperor of Hindostan received from the servants of a foreign mercantile company, although Mr. Hastings himself, in a minute recorded in the council-book on another occasion, declared, "that, fallen as the house of TIMUR is, it is yet the relic of the most illustrious line of the eastern world—that its sovereignty is universally acknowledged, though the substance of it no longer exists—and that the Company itself derives its constitutional dominion from its ostensible bounty."

The disinterestedness of Mr. Hastings in all points of pecuniary concern had in England been the theme of high panegyric; but certain facts which came to the knowledge of the new counsellors, on or soon after their arrival in India, set this part of his character also in a light which could scarcely be con-

BOOK XIX. 1781.

sidered as problematical. Of these it will suffice to touch on two or three of the most conspicuous. By the Regulating Act of 1773, a salary of 25,000*l.* per annum was settled on the governor, and he was in the most positive and peremptory manner prohibited from receiving any present or donation, in any manner, or on any account whatever. And in express allusion to the act, on his accession to the government, Mr. Hastings in the ostentation of his generosity had publicly declared, "that this prohibition admitted neither of refinement nor misconstruction, and that in his opinion an opposition would be to incur the penalty."

On the 30th of March 1775, a petition was laid before the board, setting forth, "that Khan Jehan Khan, then phousdar of Houghley, had obtained that office from the governor, with a salary of 72,000 sicca rupees per annum; and that the said phousdar *had given a receipt of bribe to the patron of the city*, to pay him annually 36,000 rupees out of the salary above mentioned." It being moved, "that the petitioner should be ordered to attend the next day to make good his charge," Mr. Hastings objected to the motion; which being nevertheless carried, the governor declared, "that he would not suffer a judicial inquiry into his conduct at the board of which he was president," and pronounced the meeting of the board dissolved. Other sums from various persons, at various times, arising

in the aggregate to a vast amount, were acknowledged by Mr. Hastings in his confidential dispatches, doubtless to guard against the effects of similar informations, to be *privately received*; but, as the governor-general *alleged*, subsequently converted to the Company's use. This however did by no means satisfactorily appear. As an apology for his original intention of concealment, he says, "Having had occasion to disburse from my own cash many sums which, though required to enable me to execute the duties of my station, I have hitherto omitted to enter in my public accounts, and my own fortune being unequal to so heavy a charge, I have resolved to reimburse myself in a mode the most suitable to the situation of your affairs, by charging the same in my durbar account of the present year, and crediting them in the sum *privately received.*" On the first suggestion of suspicion as to the motives of this conduct, he professed to the court of directors, September 1775, "that it was his fixed determination most fully and liberally to explain every circumstance." Being called upon by the court, after a very long interval, for this promised explanation, he declared, "that he had been prevented from the execution of this design by a variety of *more important occupations*; and that the submission which his respect would have enjoined him to pay to the command imposed upon

BOOK XIX. 1781.

him was LOST to his RECOLLECTION." But by far the most remarkable accusation of this nature against Mr. Hastings was that preferred by the rajah Nund-comar to the Supreme Council, in the month of March 1775, of various sums, amounting to many hundred thousand rupees, received by the governor-general for offices and employments corruptly disposed of by him; and of this the rajah, who was a native Hindoo of the Brahman caste, and of the highest rank, offered to produce incontrovertible evidence. Instead of stating any thing in his defence, Mr. Hastings declared, "that he would not suffer Nund-comar to appear before the board as his accuser," and dissolved the meeting*."

Soon after this an attempt was made by the governor to indict the rajah, before the Supreme Court of Judicature, for a conspiracy against the go-

* The legality of the power thus assumed by the governor-general, of dissolving the council at pleasure, being deemed questionable, the court of directors thought proper, for satisfaction on this point, to take the opinion of a man very eminent in his profession, who, although he decided in favor of Mr. Hastings, at the same time remarked, "that he believed him to be the first governor that ever dissolved a council inquiring into his behaviour when he was innocent." And the court of directors, in the result, "positively forbade the governor-general to dissolve any council in future, against the consent of the majority of the members actually present."

vernment: but the grand jury refusing to find the bill, it was determined to proceed against the rajah in a different mode; and while the charge against the governor was yet pending before the council, he was indicted, upon the English statute of forgery, for a certain counterfeit bond pretended to have been issued by the rajah many years before; and which, if the charge could be imagined to have any foundation, amounted, by the laws of India, only to a misdemeanor. On this accusation he was brought to trial before sir Elijah Impey, chief justice of the Supreme Court, and condemned to suffer capital punishment. Being committed to close custody in the common gaol at Calcutta amidst a crowd of felons, a petition was presented from the rajah to the Supreme Council, setting forth, "That after having been honored with the confidence of the nabob Jaffier Ally Khan, and after having discharged the first office in the subahdary, and being now ten years retired from public life, it might perhaps startle the honorable board to receive an address from him, dated from the common gaol at Calcutta, had he not prepared them for some fatal change in his situation, by the representation he had before made of the severe menaces thrown out against him by the governor-general. Should my life," said the rajah, "be taken away by the flagitious charge now laid against me by men the most abandoned, the facts before alluded to will remain upon

BOOK XIX. 1781.

record; the witnesses will be ready, and the proofs producible, whenever the governor-general has COURAGE sufficient to hear them. My only intention in setting forth the services I have done, and the character I have to an advanced age supported, is to introduce my request, that I may not suffer, from the bare accusation, a punishment equal to that of death, the violation of the most sacred duties of my religion—the institutions of which strictly enjoin a number of ablutions, prayers, and other ceremonies to be performed by the sect of Brahmans before they can take any kind of food:—nothing of this can be performed in the place where I now am. I therefore humbly request that I may be permitted to reside, under as strict a guard as may be judged requisite, in some place where these objections may be obviated."

This petition being transmitted to the chief justice, and it being at the same time represented that the rajah had remained for 80 hours without sustenance, permission was obtained to fix a tent on the outside of the prison-gate for the purpose of washing and eating. Mobaric ul Dowla, subah of Bengal, being apprised of the deplorable situation of the unfortunate rajah, transmitted a letter to the governor and council, interceding in his favor*.

* Though it is scarcely worth while in any other view to notice the rapid succession of these passing shadows, the regularity of dates is preserved by remarking, that Najim ul Dowla,

"The affair of maha rajah Nund-comar," said the subah, "is really hard and rigorous. The maha rajah has transacted affairs of the greatest importance. When Meer Cossim Ally Khan had taken the resolution to ruin or expel the English, the maha rajah exerted himself to the utmost in supplying them with grain and money. The services of the maha rajah are well known to the KING of Hindostan. Certainly he never could have committed so contemptible a crime. People employed in important affairs will, undoubtedly, have many enemies; and those who have been active in the affair of Nund-comar have long been his declared foes. Taking therefore into consideration the welfare of the people, I beg, with respect to this affair, that the rajah's execution may be suspended till the pleasure of his majesty the king of England shall be known."

This intercession, however, proved wholly unavailing and useless. In a paper written by Nund-comar, for the inspection of the Supreme Council, he says, "Now that the hour of death approaches, I shall not, for the sake of this world, be regardless

eldest surviving son of Jaffier Ally Khan, died in May 1766, fifteen months after his advancement to the musnud. His brother Syef ul Dowla succeeded, and lived till May 1770. The present nabob, Mobaric ul Dowla, was the youngest son of Meer Jaffier, and thirteen years of age only at the period of his mock elevation to the throne of Bengal.

BOOK XIX. 1781.

of the next. The forgery of the bond, of which I am accused, never proceeded from me. For the fault of representing a just fact, my enemies, having no other means to conceal their own actions, deeming my destruction of the utmost expediency for themselves, revived an old affair of Mohun Persaud, which had been formerly found to be false; and LORD IMPEY and the other judges have tried me by the English laws, which are contrary to the customs of this country—and, taking the evidence of my enemies, have condemned me to death. In my last moments I request that you, general, will write my case to the just king of England.—I suffer, but my innocence will certainly be made known to him."

On the 5th of August 1775, the day fixed for the execution of the rajah, he appeared on the public scaffold without discovering the least symptom of discomposure. He desired the sheriff to present his last respectful salutations to general Clavering, colonel Monson, and Mr. Francis; and pray for their protection of rajah Gourdass, and that they would please to look on him now as head of the Brahmans. When not engaged in conversation aloud, his lips continued moving as if engaged in prayer, his beads hanging in his hand. The Brahmans who attended him on this melancholy occasion were in agonies of grief and despair; and the surrounding crowd testified their horror and con-

sternation at this event by clamorous howlings and lamentations. The rajah embraced the attending Brahmans closely, and said he was ready. "My own spirits sunk," says the sheriff, Mr. Mac Raby, in his interesting narrative of this extraordinary scene, "and I stepped into my palankeen; but before I was well seated he had given the signal, and the stage was removed. His steadiness, composure, and resolution, throughout the whole of the melancholy transaction, were equal to any examples of fortitude I have ever seen or read of. The body was taken down, after HANGING the usual time, and delivered to the Brahmans for burning."—Thus miserably perished the most distinguished and illustrious of the Hindoo inhabitants of Bengal: and in the subsequent council minute of sir John Clavering, colonel Monson, and Mr. Francis, these gentlemen with good reason say, "After the death of Nund-comar, the governor we believe is well assured that no man who regards his safety will venture to stand forth as his accuser;—and they remark, that in the interim which had elapsed since the alleged offence of the rajah he had been promoted and employed by the governor-general; that his son the rajah Gourdass was appointed to one of the first offices in the nabob's household;—and that the accusation, which ended in his destruction, was not produced till he came

BOOK XIX. 1781.

forward and brought a specific charge against the governor-general, of corruption in his office."

The conduct of the governor-general in relation to Mahomed Reza Khan, a mussulman of the highest distinction, was scarcely less extraordinary; though to attempt to develop the secret motives which led to it would open a scene of dark and complex intrigue totally foreign to the purposes of general history *. This distinguished personage was, through the influence of the English government, on the decease of the late nabob, Meer Jaffier Ally Khan, constituted guardian of his children, and administrator or regent of the subahdary during the minority of his son Nudjah or Najem ul Dowla. As to his general character, the late president, lord Clive, in his letter to the Supreme Council of July 3d, 1765, says, "It is with pleasure I can acquaint you, that the more I see of Mahomed Reza Khan the stronger is my conviction of his honor and moderation." Also the president and council, in their

* As the true solution of Mr. Hastings's conduct respecting Mahomed Reza Khan, it has been affirmed, that this minister was elevated to the high station he occupied by the interest of lord Clive; and that Mr. Hastings was, on the other hand, intimately connected with the Anti-Clive or Sullivan faction, to whom he owed his advancement. With at least equal probability it has been said, that the disgust of Mr. Hastings arose from the attachment shown by Mahomed Reza Khan to sir John Clavering, and the other members of the Supreme Council, in opposition to Mr. Hastings.

dispatch to the court of directors, June 1767, say, "Mahomed Reza Khan has pursued the Company's interest with steadiness and diligence; his abilities qualify him to perform the most important services." And the court of directors, in their letter of February 1768, say, "We must, in justice to Mahomed Reza Khan, express the high sense we entertain of his abilities, and of the indefatigable attention he has shown in the execution of the important trust reposed in him." Nevertheless, the cabals of his enemies after a time so far prevailed, that the court of directors transmitted orders to deprive Mahomed Reza Khan of his office, and to institute an inquiry into his conduct. In conformity to his secret instructions, Mr. Hastings caused this minister to be arrested in the city of Moorshedabad, and to be brought down to Calcutta, where he was, by various artifices of delay, kept in custody for two years. At length being brought to trial, he was completely and honorably acquitted of the charges preferred against him: and the court of directors, in their subsequent dispatch, testify their satisfaction in the result of this inquiry; at the same time ordering him to be re-instated in the offices which he had heretofore held. This was accordingly done by general Clavering, colonel Monson, and Mr. Francis, who now constituted the majority of the council:—not, however, without a formal protest from the governor-general Hastings; though the

BOOK XIX. 1781.

court of directors again declared their high approbation of this re-appointment, giving him an assurance of their favor and protection. This was, however, of little avail; for no sooner did Mr. Hastings obtain a majority in the council, by the deaths, first of colonel Monson (Sept. 1776), and in the following year of sir John Clavering, than Mahomed Reza Khan was again removed from all his offices, the principal of which was filled by Sudder ul Hock Khan, a man wholly devoted to the governor, who wrote to the nabob, that nothing could retrieve the confusion into which the country was thrown but an unlimited power lodged in the hands of the superintendant: to which the nabob, now become, to use the words of Mr. Hastings, "a mere pageant without even the shadow of authority," his annual revenue also being arbitrarily reduced from 42 to 16 lacks—expressed in abject terms his entire acquiescence and submission. The court of directors, on being informed of these proceedings, in a tone of high displeasure declared, "that NO DOUBT could be entertained of the true design of this extraordinary business," and positively commanded the immediate restoration of Mahomed Reza Khan to the office of naib subahdar. After much studied evasion and delay this order was complied with. But, on the departure of Mr. Francis from India, Mahomed Reza Khan was a third time dismissed from his office, by Mr. Hastings,

without any specific charge, trial, or inquiry whatsoever.—On a retrospective view of these transactions, it cannot but excite our astonishment to hear Mr. Hastings affirm in his Minutes of Defence, respecting Mahomed Reza Khan, "I am sure his sentiments for me are those of GRATITUDE and AFFECTION." On the last dismission of Reza Khan, sir John Doyley was placed near the person of the nabob Mobaric ul Dowla, to superintend his expences, with a particular instruction to the nabob, not to admit any English, but such as the said sir John Doyley should approve, to his presence. SUCH was the spirit of Mr. Hastings's internal administration. The most remarkable events relating to his external policy yet remain to be investigated.

The MAHRATTA STATES are the only people of Hindostan who were not subdued by the Moguls, or who never acknowledged allegiance to the house of Timur. Secure amidst their inaccessible mountains, they preserved unimpaired their liberty and independency, and were at all times regarded by the most powerful of the Mahomedan emperors as very formidable adversaries. This nation consisted of a number of distinct tribes, governed by their respective chieftains, but who all recognized as their supreme head a prince styled the Sou or Ram Rajah, i. e. the Great Rajah, whose throne was established at Setterah. Since the decline of the Mogul power, that of the Mahrattas had risen rapidly on its ruins.

BOOK XIX. 1781.

At this period their dominions extended from Travancore, near the southern extremity of the peninsula, to the province of Guzzerat, northward, divided from the Persian territories by the river Paddar, the Jumna separating them from the empire of the Mogul. To the east they stretch to the Carnatic, and the dominions of the Nizam of the Decan, the province of Catac carrying their possessions irregularly across the peninsula to the Bay of Bengal. Their revenues were computed to amount to more than twelve millions sterling; and their military establishment, which was composed chiefly of cavalry, to 300,000 men.

It is a singular circumstance in this government, that the sovereignty of the Sou or Ram rajah exists at this day only in name. Nana Row, peishwa or prime minister of the country at a period not very remote, seizing the person of the rajah, confined him in a fortress near Setterah; and, usurping the powers of the government, continued to administer them in the name of the sovereign. Nana Row, dying, left the succession to his son Mada Row, who finding a rival in the person of Ragonaut Row, his uncle, a man of an intriguing disposition and most flagitious character, kept him in close confinement till near the time of his own death; when, being anxiously desirous to ensure the quiet succession of the peishwaship to his brother Narrain Row, he became reconciled to Ragonaut, in consequence of

the most solemn promises of the latter to assist the young Narrain Row with his most tender care, protection, and advice. The credulous Mada Row shed tears of joy and satisfaction at this happy event, and closed his eyes in peace. But the vile and unnatural wretch, thus generously liberated, immediately engaged in new plots against his nephew Narrain; and in a few months after his accession, September 1773, the young peishwa was assassinated by the villanous contrivance of his uncle, who expected to have succeeded without difficulty to the government. But the horror and detestation excited by a crime of this enormous magnitude occasioned an opposition so general, that the parricide Ragonaut was compelled to fly his country.

Unhappily he directed his course to the island of Bombay, the government of which not only granted him, without hesitation, their protection; but, affecting to admit the validity of his claims, they commenced open hostilities against the Mahrattas, indulging the most ambitious and sanguine hopes, if the restoration of Ragonaut Row could be accomplished by their aid, to rival Madras and Calcutta in opulence and power.

The island of Salsette and the city of Baroach were quickly reduced by the valor of the Company's troops; but it does not appear that at this period the presidency of Bombay received any encouragement from Mr. Hastings to prosecute these

BOOK XIX. 1781.

nefarious projects of aggrandisement. On the contrary, the governor joined with the new counsellors, Clavering, Monson, and Francis, in reprobating these proceedings; declaring, by an act of council passed May 1775, that the measures adopted by the presidency of Bombay had a tendency to a very extensive and indefinite scene of troubles; and that their conduct was unseasonable, impolitic, unjust, and unauthorised." And availing themselves of the superiority vested in them by the late act, colonel Upton was sent on an embassy to the Mahratta court, for the purpose of negotiating a peace, which was concluded at Poonah, and ratified March 1st, 1776, upon terms very honorable and advantageous. By this treaty Salsette, Baroach, and various adjoining districts in the Guzzerat provinces, were ceded to the Company, and the sum of twelve lacks of rupees allotted to them as an indemnification for the expences of the war.

On the other hand, it was stipulated that Ragonaut Row should withdraw from Bombay, and that no protection or assistance should be granted to him or any other subject of the Mahratta state who may cause any disturbance or rebellion in that country. Notwithstanding the solemnity of this engagement, Ragonaut Row still continued at Bombay, and, by means of his agents, fomented parties and dissensions in the court of Poonah, until the Mahratta government, jealous in the highest

degree of the designs of the English, were provoked to receive with marked distinction the chevalier de St. Lubin, agent or ambassador from the French presidency of Pondicherry.

Mr. Hastings was now completely emancipated from the control of the new commission, by the successive deaths of colonel Monson and general Clavering; and even previous to the decease of the latter, being assured of the invariable support of Mr. Barwell, his own casting vote gave him on all occasions a decided majority.

It is very remarkable that, during the whole course of the contention between the governor-general and the new counsellors, the proceedings of the governor were, in almost every dispatch from England, censured and condemned in severe terms, while the conduct of his opponents was as uniformly applauded; yet the governor-general was unaccountably continued in office, and suffered ultimately to carry his romantic projects into unrestrained and ruinous execution. In their letter of April 1776, the court of directors highly commend the indefatigable assiduity which, they say, appears in the laborious researches of the *majority* of the council, and their zeal for the interest of the Company, and the welfare of the inhabitants, as well natives as Europeans. In a subsequent letter, addressed to sir John Clavering, in the expectation of his speedy return to Europe, the court express the

BOOK XIX. 1781.

deep sense they entertain of his singular services, and the great concern they felt at the prospect of losing so invaluable a servant. And in their general letter of May 7, 1778, they lament the death of sir John Clavering in warm and affectionate terms, as a great and public loss to the East-India Company and to his country. So indeed it proved: for the governor-general, no longer restrained by the presence of this inflexible CENSOR, fixing his eyes on the western side of the continent, perceived an immense field in which his ambitious and restless disposition might find a boundless scope of activity and exertion *.

* Soon after the death of sir John Clavering, Mr. Francis transmitted to the minister, lord North, a letter or memorial, dated September 1777, excellently written, and stating in the clearest manner the nature and pernicious effects of the policy pursued by the English government in Bengal, and the measures necessary to establish permanent peace and prosperity in India. In discussing the interesting question—"To what extent, and in what form, the actual sovereignty of Great Britain over those provinces shall be avowed?" he observes, "that the principal branches of the sovereign power are exercised by the East-India Company, partly under the authority of the subahdar, partly under that of the king of Great Britain. At the same time the natives in general acknowledge no king but the Mogul, in whose name the revenues are collected, and the current money of Bengal coined. Hence arise all the evils which flow from a divided dominion. The safest, the most simple, and the least invidious principle on which this territory could be held, Mr. Francis pronounces to

On the 28th of January, 1778, the governor introduced the subject at the Supreme Board in a very long minute, unfolding in a sufficiently unequivocal manner his vast and daring projects. "If REPORT could be believed," Mr. Hastings said, "written engagements had passed between the Mahratta court and M. St. Lubin, the object of which, whatever it be, must, if attempted, prove destructive to the British trade and influence in India. Although the Mahratta power, unallied with other states, was unable to cope with the Company, yet, sustained by the French, they are qualified to refuse acquiescence with our demands,

be that of a fixed tribute from the native prince of the country, avoiding all interference with the internal government. Circumstances (says this sagacious counsellor) inseparable perhaps from the constitution of the East-India Company, disqualified them in every sense for the duty and office which the acquisition of a territory in India imposed upon them. A body of merchants had interests to provide for besides those which belonged to them in their assumed character of sovereign. Profit, being the only object of a trading company, became the sole object of government when the two characters were united. Commercial principles of the worst quality, as derived from the constitution of an exclusive company, were all the principles which the India Company brought with them into the government of a great kingdom, and IT HAS BEEN GOVERNED ACCORDINGLY.

"After raising the revenues as nearly as possible to the level of the [redacted], for the support of their GOVERNMENT, they mo[redacted] produce and labor of the country for the support

BOOK XIX. 1781.

which demands the island of Basseen offers as the only prospect of a security: that no obligation precludes us from demanding it, nor can any blame be imputed to us, if, as the superior power, we prescribe the terms of accommodation."

of their TRADE. To obtain the highest possible revenue from the land, they were obliged to avow, or countenance, a principle subversive of all national prosperity, and not less false in fact than absurd in theory and dangerous in practice—'that the ruling power was proprietor of the soil.' On this principle they universally dispossessed the hereditary and lawful owners, and farmed the country to strangers. In a few instances, where the proprietors were employed, it was not in their true character, but as farmers of government. *There is* NO EXAMPLE, *I believe, of such an* ACT OF POWER *in the* HISTORY *of* HINDOSTAN. 'Of all despotic governments,' M. Montesquieu tells us, 'there is none more oppressive than that where the prince declares himself proprietor of the soil, and heir of all his subjects. It always follows that the cultivation of the earth is abandoned; but if, besides this, the prince is a merchant, every species of industry is ruined.'

"Your lordship will soon perceive how much it is the general object of this representation to establish an opinion, that to make the possession of Bengal beneficial and permanent, we should revert to the ancient institutions of the country as far as we are acquainted with them, and present circumstances will permit. If it were not for the experience of some years past, it might be superfluous to say, that we provide for our interests when we consult the happiness and prosperity of the people who labor for us.

"It appears to have been the Company's original policy, or that of lord Clive, to govern these provinces through the medium of the subahdar, and the best they could adopt, sup-

In addition to this demand, Mr. Hastings, in the plan subsequently laid by him before the board, BOOK XIX. 1781.

posing them to interpose in any shape in the internal government. This system was soon violated in fact, and not long afterwards avowedly renounced. The predominant power of the council at Calcutta necessarily reduced the subahdar to a cipher, and left him and his subjects, as it will always do, a prey to individuals. Forms and appearances were, however, in some degree preserved till the death of Syef ul Dowla, in 1770. From that period we see nothing in the administration of public affairs but enormous abuses on one side, and an absolute want of power or perseverance to correct them on the other. The subahdar's authority, since the company's acceptance of the dewannee, has been gradually reduced under three successive nabobs, and is now merely titular in the person of Mobareck ul Dowla. The administration of criminal justice is, however, still exercised in his name by the naib subah Mahomed Reza Khan, and we sometimes avail ourselves of the pretence of his authority in our differences with the foreign factories.

"The Company hold the dewannee by grant of the Mogul Sha Allum. The treaty concluded by lord Clive, August 1765, not only acknowledges him as king of Bengal, but secures to him the full possession of Korah and Illahabad, as a royal demesne for the support of his dignity and expences; and by a particular agreement between him and the Company, of the same date, they engage themselves to be security for the payment of twenty-six lacks a year, out of the territorial revenue, *in consideration* of his majesty's having been graciously pleased to grant them the dewannee of Bengal. Your lordship knows how little these treaties have been regarded. His tribute was stopped, and his country, though avowedly intrusted to our good faith, and accepted as a deposit, sold to Suja ul Dowla.

BOOK XIX. 1781.

required "that the Mahratta government give such security for the personal safety of Ragonaut Row

"The British power is now unquestionably the first in India, at least for defence. To make it respectable in itself, and beneficial to mankind, it must be guided by solid, judicious principles of policy, and they must be steadily pursued. Enough has been done to establish the reputation of our arms. If we mean to keep what we have acquired, *some* care must be taken to establish an opinion of our steadiness and justice.

"With respect to the amount and collection of the revenues, the principal questions are—1st, Whether the lands shall be restored to the hereditary owners? 2dly, Whether the revenues payable to government shall be fixed immutably at a certain sum? and 3dly, By what rule or standard that sum shall be ascertained?—To the two first questions I have invariably given an affirmative answer, founded on reasons which I deem incontrovertible. The third must be determined by the capacity of the country, estimated from an average of the actual collections, and combined with the indispensable demands of government. The *farming system* was adopted as the act of a proprietor, with a professed view of discovering the ultimate value of the estate, or the utmost that could be obtained from it. Your lordship will judge how far the end, supposing it attainable, could justify the means. To general Clavering, colonel Monson, and myself, it always appeared an arbitrary, unexampled act of power, without a shadow of right to support it. The principle on which it went annihilated every idea of private property, while in fact it has been ruinous to the country, for the sole benefit of the Company's servants and their banyans. But even if the farms had in every instance been fairly allotted to the highest bidders, the measure could have produced no other consequence than that of forcibly alienating the whole landed property of the country in favor of indigent strangers

as *he himself* shall require; that a specific sum be demanded to re-imburse the Company for their late

and adventurers, equally ignorant of the value and circumstances of the farm, and careless how much they offered for immediate possession. The last settlement made by the COMMITTEE of CIRCUIT promised an immoderate increase of revenue, at a time when the famine had swept away ONE THIRD of the inhabitants, and when the country was represented to be in a general state of decay. What the real object of the measure was may be collected from the success of it.

"The balances and remissions on the settlements of the last five years amount to the enormous sum of two hundred and thirty lacks of sicca rupees. The plain truth is, that over-ratement and remission play into each other's hands. If the country be exorbitantly taxed, the governor and council *must* be trusted with a discretionary power to make remissions. This latitude once given, or assumed, it may be impossible to determine in what manner it is applied, or where the remissions centre at last, since the distribution may be so formed as to interest all parties in concealing it.

"If we had no facts or experience to guide our conjectures, it is apparent that a country exposed to arbitrary variations in the annual assessments, at the discretion of a council of state, especially at this immense distance from the seat of empire, offers temptations which will not be ALWAYS resisted. Improvements in such a state of things are not to be expected, for who will employ his money or his labor in the cultivation of a soil that does not belong to him? or when he has no security that the whole produce may not be extorted from him by a new assessment?—The same system of taxation which annihilates the property, attacks the industry of the subject, and invades the *sources* of production.

BOOK XIX. 1781.

military charges; that a grant of territory be made contiguous to Basseen; and that no European settlement be allowed on the Mahratta coasts without consent of the Company." At the same time he communicated a plan formed by the presidency of Bombay, to re-instate Ragonaut Row in the peishwaship by force of arms, being invited to this enterprise by sundry members of the Mahratta government.

After much opposition from Mr. Francis and Mr. Wheeler, who had recently succeeded sir John Clavering as a member of the board, the governor's proposals were carried in council by his own casting vote; and it was finally determined to support Ragonaut Row, in the event of the infraction of the Poonah or Poorunder Treaty, AS NOW EXPLAINED. Asserting that "the presidency of Bengal was in a condition to assist Bombay abundantly with men and money to carry on the Mahratta war," Mr. Hastings proposed to march a large detachment of the Company's troops across the continent, for the purpose of reinforcing the Bombay army. This

"A NEW PRINCIPLE must be assumed for the government of the country, or it MUST FALL. The plain and simple remedy is, to oblige the Company to revert to their original principles, to renounce the unnatural character in which they have lately acted, and, if it be possible, TO BECOME MERCHANTS AGAIN."

also being carried in the same manner, the destined reinforcement under colonel Leslie commenced this unprecedented march of 1100 miles early in May 1778.

Previous to this event, a letter was received from the court of directors, positively enjoining a strict adherence to the treaty of Poorunder. But Mr. Hastings, in a haughty and peremptory tone, declared "his unalterable determination to prosecute the measures in which he had now engaged, to the utmost of his power."

In order to promote and corroborate the success of his project, Mr. Hastings had for some time past most assiduously courted the friendship and alliance of the rajah of Berar, Moodajee Boosla, whose dominions occupied in great part the intermediate space between those of the Company and of the Mahratta States, inciting and urging that prince, who was far advanced in years, and of a mild and pacific disposition, openly to avow his claim to the sovereignty of the Mahrattas, to which the rajah had some obscure and remote pretensions. "In the whole of my conduct," says the governor-general in a letter addressed to the prime-minister of the court of Naigpore (November 1778), "I have departed from the common line of policy, and have made advances when others in my situation would have waited for solicitations; but I trust to the approved bravery and spirit of the maha-

BOOK XIX. 1781.

rajah, that he will *ardently catch* at the objects presented to his *ambition.*"

Moodajee Boosla was, however, so far from being willing to embark himself and his fortunes in the wild and crude projects of the English governor, that he wrote with his own hand a letter to Mr. Hastings, inculcating, in very respectful terms, and in a manner which did equal honor to his head and his heart, the most just and salutary maxims of conduct both moral and political:—"Your friendly letter," says the rajah, "of the 19th Ramzan, informs me that you have given directions to colonel Leslie to co-operate with the forces which I shall unite with his; that as you offer me the forces of the circar to promote my views, you in return request the assistance of mine to effect your purposes; that having thus explained to me your sentiments and views, you wait only to know mine.—The having caused a translation to be made into English of the Hindoo books called the Shasta, &c. and keeping the pictures of the former kings of Hindostan before your eyes, from their lifeless similitudes to discover which of them were worthy of rule and possessed of good faith—also the endeavour to preserve the blessing of peace till *forced* to relinquish it—the supporting of every one in his hereditary right, and revenging the breach of faith and engagements, but, on the submission of the offenders, the exercise of the virtues of clemency and generosity—the not suffering

the intoxication of power to seduce you into a breach of faith, and the giving support to each illustrious house, in proportion to its respective merits—these are the sure means of exalting your greatness and prosperity to the highest pitch. The ALMIGHTY disposes of kingdoms, and places whomsoever he pleases on the seats of power and rule; but makes their stability to depend on their peaceable, just, and friendly conduct to others. MY conduct is framed on these principles—I have not yet recovered the shock of Mr. Elliot's death: had he survived, such strokes of policy would have been employed, that the suspicions of the Poonah ministers, from apprehensions of support being given to Ragonaut Row, which have caused them great uneasiness, would have been entirely removed." BOOK XIX. 1781.

Notwithstanding the failure of this negotiation, Mr. Hastings was not to be deterred from the prosecution of his project. In proportion as difficulties presented themselves, his perseverance and pertinacity seemed to increase.

Colonel Leslie, who commanded the army now on its march to Bombay, dying October 1778, was succeeded by colonel Goddard. This able officer, after surmounting great and various obstacles, reached the southern banks of the Narbudda, within the territory of Berar, January 1779; and immediately detached lieutenant Wetherstone to the court of

BOOK XIX. 1781.

Naigpore, again to urge the rajah's accession to the proposed plan of operation. But the lieutenant, in his letters to colonel Goddard, declares "that the government of Berar were determined not to take any active part whatever with the Company's armies; that they had a thousand arguments to oppose to those he urged in favor of the plan for assuming the dignity of Ram-rajah of Setterah, *particularly* the faith pledged, and the alliance of friendship they had *sworn to*, with the present peishwa; that the asserting their pretensions to the sovereignty would meet with numberless oppositions; and that success could not be obtained without shedding much blood, and at the expence of violating the *sacred engagements* before entered into with them."

Mr. Wetherstone further says, "that it seemed now to be the first wish of the court of Berar to set aside our connexion with Ragonaut Row, the supporting of whom they asserted to be highly impolitical, and that in the end it would be fully proved so; that this chief, Ragonaut Row, was held in universal abhorrence; and that the prejudices against him in the Decan would not easily, if ever, be removed. And the rajah earnestly offered his mediation to make up all the existing differences."

About this period, likewise, letters were received by the governor-general from Siccaram Pundit,

prime-minister of the Poonah government, containing heavy complaints of the conduct of the English since the conclusion of the treaty of Poorunder. BOOK XIX. 1781.

"The government of Bombay from that period has, in every instance (he asserts), excited troubles and commotions, in violation of the ties of friendship; and notwithstanding the express stipulation to expel Ragonaut Row from the dominions of the Company, they have performed nothing thereof. Out of regard to the friendship and alliance of the Company, I call God to witness that the envoy of France was dismissed without negotiating with him. It is mutually incumbent upon us to observe the terms of the treaty."

And again, in a subsequent dispatch, the same minister says, "Notwithstanding the conclusion of the treaty, the Bombay government kept Ragonaut Row with them. It even appears to a conviction, that they *persuaded* Ragoba, i. e. Ragonaut Row, to the measures he has pursued. How then does the supreme authority of the council of Calcutta from the king of England appear, since the chiefs of the different settlements do not regard engagements made by you as binding on them? And you, sir, paying no regard to your own acts, take your measures on the representations of the government of Bombay. This is indeed astonishing to the highest degree! It is the dictate of sound policy, that you withdraw your troops to your own territory.

BOOK XIX. 1781.

This will be a convincing proof of the sincerity of your friendship, and will spread the fame of your good faith throughout the universe. From the commencement of the government of the family of the peishwa, they have entered into treaties with many of the chiefs of the East and West, *and have never before experienced such a want of faith from any one.*"

In the mean time, pending these negotiations and the march of the Bengal army, the presidency of Bombay, possessed with high ideas of their own strength, confident of success, and jealous lest, by the arrival of the expected reinforcements, they should be obliged to divide the honor and profit of the expedition into the Mahratta country with those of whose assistance they had no need, having made all the previous military preparations, and formally declared the treaty of Poorunder void, put their troops in motion November 1778.

The event of this expedition cannot be better related than in the words of Row Ghee, resident at the court of Poonah from the nabob of Arcot: "The English *surdars*," says this intelligent observer, in a letter to the nabob, "with an army consisting of 700 Europeans, eight battalions of sepoys, and 40 pieces of cannon, marched, as I have already wrote to your highness, from Bombay to the passes. Siccaram Pundit and Nana Furnese joined their forces, and satisfied the discontented

chiefs, Scindia and Holkar, by giving them money, jaghires, and other presents. All the chiefs having met to consult, agreed unanimously 'not to receive Ragonaut Row, since he came with an army of English, who were of a different nation from them, and whose conduct in Sujah Dowla's country, the Rohilla country, Bengal, and the Carnatic, *they were well acquainted with.* Otherwise, in the end they would be obliged to forsake their religion, and become the SLAVES of EUROPEANS.' Upon this they exchanged oaths, and a great army was sent to occupy the ghaut or pass of Tullicanoon. Mr. Martyn, the Bombay resident at Poonah, had encouraged the English to believe that, as soon as their army should arrive at the ghaut, Holkar would join them with all his forces. The English, trusting to this, waited there with impatience for a whole month, but no one appeared to join their standard. They then marched forward, although much harassed by the Mahrattas, who at length completely cut off their supplies of provisions.

"The English then determined upon retreating back to the ghaut; but Siccaram, gaining intelligence of their march, detached a large body of troops to intercept them. An obstinate engagement ensued on the 18th of January, 1779, in which the English, being surrounded and overpowered, lost 200 Europeans and 1200 sepoys.

BOOK XIX. 1781.

No possibility of escape now remained; and on the renewal of hostilities on the 15th by a heavy cannonade from the Mahrattas, a gentleman, Mr. Farmer, advancing from the English camp, the firing ceased. The chiefs of the Mahrattas sent for him into their presence, and Mr. Farmer addressed them in the following words:—'We are only MERCHANTS—when disputes prevailed with you, Ragonaut Row came to us and demanded our protection. We thought he had a right to the government, and gave him our assistance. Nothing but ill fortune attends him, and we have been brought to this miserable state by keeping him with us. You are masters to keep him from us. We shall henceforth adhere to the treaties that have formerly taken place between us; be pleased to forgive what has happened.'

"The minister answered, 'Ragonaut Row is one of us—what right could you have to interfere in our concerns with him? We now desire you to give up Salsette and Basseen, and what other countries you have possessed yourselves of. Adhere to the treaty made in the time of Bajalee Row*, and ask nothing else.'

"Next day at noon Mr. Farmer returned, and told Scindia 'that he had brought a blank

* This treaty was made in September 1761.

paper signed and sealed, which the Mahratta chiefs will fill up as they pleased.' Scindia told the chiefs, that although they had it in their power to make any demands they pleased, it would not be advisable to do it at this time. For our making large demands would only sow resentment in their hearts, and we had better demand only what is necessary. Let Ragonaut Row be with us—let Salsette and the pergunnahs in Guzzerat be restored—let the Bengal army return back.' BOOK XIX. 1781.

"These articles being written out on paper, in Persian, Mahratta, and English, sealed with the Company's seal, were signed at Worgaum by general Carnac and seven officers. Hostages were given for the due performance of them. After this the Mahratta surdars sent them victuals, which they needed much. The English and sepoys, grounding their arms, marched out, escorted by 2000 Mahratta horse."

Intelligence of this disastrous event having reached Calcutta, Mr. Hastings declared in council, that general Goddard, in case of the failure of the Poonah expedition from Bombay, had his express orders to recur to his negotiations with Moodajee Boosla, which implied his return to Berar. But that officer, regardless of this strange instruction, proceeded by forced marches to Surat, agreeably to the requisition of the presidency of Bombay.—

BOOK XIX. 1761.

This government, in their dispatches to the Supreme Council, after stating the defeat of their army, have the effrontery to say, "that they did not think themselves obligated by the conditions of the subsequent treaty; but that, having intentions to enter into another, they had transmitted directions to general Goddard accordingly."

Mr. Hastings expressed his approbation of the tenor of this dispatch, and, declaring "that the treaty, being made by persons unauthorized to subscribe to such conditions, was invalid, proposed that general Goddard be commissioned to negotiate at the court of Poonah for the renewal of the treaty of Poorunder—and that the presidency of Bombay be required to prepare for service, whether offensive or defensive."

Mr. Francis entered in the council-book his reasons for dissenting from the governor-general, in a minute replete with good sense and sound policy. He admitted "the probability that peace might be obtained on the terms of the treaty of Poorunder, provided this government be itself in earnest in pursuit of its present object, and suffered not itself to be entangled in the desperate schemes of those who now constitute the government of Bombay. The re-establishment of peace on the Malabar coast I deem," said this wise and faithful counsellor, "to be essential, not merely to the prosperity of the

India Company, but to their existence. Let a war upon that coast be conducted how it may, the difference between conquest and defeat, in my judgment, is little more than the delay or acceleration of the ruin of all our resources. The annexed account shows that during the last five years they have received little less than 116 lacks of current rupees directly out of the revenues of Bengal. Yet their bond-debt accumulated daily, and now amounts to 38 lacks. By the month of October, the president Hornby says, their finances will be utterly exhausted—in the interval they will want a supply of 30 lacks. Of this sum the president proposes to borrow 20 lacks, but doubts the possibility of raising so large a sum; and if it could be borrowed, he says, they have no funds to pay even the interest. We should do well to consider how long we can maintain a war on such a footing, before we engage in it. I will not suppose the case of new miscarriages. Let it be admitted, that success and conquest are as certain as the most sanguine expectation can imagine, it does not follow that the objects to be obtained by them are such as we ought to aim at in our present circumstances, or that victory will pay its own expences. By extending our territorial possessions, we create irreconcileable enmity in the minds of those powers whom we immediately rob of their property. We fill every

BOOK XIX. 1781.

BOOK XIX. 1781.

other Indian state with jealousy and alarm, and the territory we acquire comes wasted and depopulated into our hands. The nation now perhaps looks to Bengal as its last and greatest external resource. But if this demand upon us from home were not so pressing, and so likely to increase as I think it is, it is time for us to consider whether there be in Great Britain a fundamental force equal to the tenure of unbounded acquisition at this distance from the seat of empire; or whether we are not arrived at a point at which common prudence dictates to us to fix once for all the limits of our dominion. If my judgment were to prevail, it should be our object to CONTRACT them." To the whole of this most judicious and weighty minute of Mr. Francis, the governor-general was pleased to declare, in very laconic terms, "that, from his anxiety to avoid controversy, he should decline any reply."

A letter was then read by the governor, in answer to the dispatches from Bombay, which, though strongly objected to by Mr. Francis and Mr. Wheeler, received the sanction of Mr. Barwell, and of sir Eyre Coote, who had now taken his place at the board as commander in chief of the Company's forces. In this letter, which is written in a style of such artful and studied confusion as to be in many parts really unintelligible, the governor, in name of himself and

council, acquaints the presidency of Bombay, in terms which have at least the merit of being plain and explicit, "that the government of Bengal refuses to ratify even the smallest tittle of the treaty or convention of Worgaum; that general Goddard was invested with full powers to conclude a pacification with the court of Poonah, on the terms prescribed in his instructions; and that, if the Mahratta ministers shall reject those proposals, and the Company be reduced to the necessity of defending its rights by an open war, a latitude of action is left to general Goddard to avail himself of the situation which fortune shall present to him. With respect to Moodajee Boosla, it is confessed that little hope is at this time entertained of his concurrence; but if, beyond expectation, the rajah shall discover a willingness to accept of the proposed alliance, instructions for that purpose are given to general Goddard. This negotiation is left," to adopt the strange and perplexed phraseology of this letter, "to the sole management of general Goddard, in the authority of those instructions, until the period of their suspension by the refusal or such hesitation of Moodajee Boosla as he shall deem sufficient to warrant his declaring the negotiation suspended. The future renewal of this negotiation we reserve to be determined by our express orders, but without revoking the cre-

BOOK XIX. 1781.

BOOK XIX. 1781.

dentials and instructions already granted to general Goddard respecting it." It would be hard indeed if the governor, in the event of any sinister catastrophe, could not, under the impenetrable veil of such mysterious ambiguity of direction, screen himself from any disagreeable responsibility.

Mr. Hastings, in order to enforce the general system of policy contained in this letter, moreover declared to the council, "that he never would suffer the object to be lost, for which the detachment now commanded by general Goddard was first appointed." This passed in the month of June 1779; and by a letter from general Goddard, dated October following, the governor and council are informed, as they had every reason to expect, that the peishwa's minister had, in plain and positive terms, declared to him that his master would not accede to the proposals made by general Goddard, or conclude peace with the English, unless Ragonaut Row, who had escaped, was delivered up to him, and Salsette surrendered to the Mahratta government; that, in consequence of this declaration, general Goddard had broken off the negotiation, and prepared for war." As was predicted by Mr. Francis, the whole Mahratta race, including the RAJAH of BERAR, together with Hyder Ally Khan, and the nizam or subah of the Decan, in the highest degree exasperated and inflamed at the

Confederacy of the powers of India against the English.

treachery of the English government, now entered into an alliance, in conjunction with the French, to expel the English nation from India;—a combination of powers truly formidable, and which eventually shook the British empire in the East to its centre.

BOOK XX.

DISTRESS of the Government of Bengal. Ravages of Hyder Ally in the Carnatic. Naval Encounters in the East Indies. Parliamentary Proceedings against Sir Thomas Rumbold. Sir Elijah Impey recalled from India. Ineffectual Resolutions of the House of Commons, and of the Court of Directors, for the Recall of Mr. Hastings from India. Military Operations in India. Resignation of Mr. Hastings. His Character. Attempt on the Isle of Jersey. Capture of St. Eustatia. Tobago taken by the French. Eustatia re-taken by the French. Naval ond Military Operations in America. Colonel Tarleton defeated at the Cowpens. Victory of Lord Cornwallis at Guildford. General Green's masterly Conduct. Lord Cornwallis's Successes in Virginia. Reverse of Fortune. Lord Cornwallis and his Army made Prisoners of War. Triumph of the Americans on the Capture of a second Royal Army. Commodore Johnstone's Expedition to the Cape of Good Hope. Obstinate Engagement between the English and Dutch Fleets off the Dogger Bank. Spirited Proceedings of the Parliament and People of Ireland.

BOOK XX.

1781. Distress of the government of Bengal.

IN the progress of the war, thus wantonly provoked, the government of Bengal soon found itself reduced to the extremest necessity for money to defray the enormous expence of its complex and extended operations. Rolling his baleful eyes

around, the governor-general at length fixed them on the territory of Benares, a province depending on the viziriate of Oude, highly cultivated and populous, and the capital city of which, situated on the Ganges, has for ages been regarded by the Hindoos as a place of peculiar and indelible sanctity, as the seat and centre of their science, their laws, their philosophy, and religion. The late rajah of Benares, Bulwant Sing, during the wars between the vizier and the Company, had zealously attached himself to the English interest; and the court of directors, in their letter of May 26, 1768, acknowledge "the signal services he had rendered them; and they express their hope, that the attention paid to those who have espoused their interests in this war will *restore* their reputation in Hindostan, and that the Indian powers will be convinced that no breach of treaty will ever have their sanction."

BOOK XX. 1781.

Two years after this Bulwant Sing died, leaving the succession to his son, Cheyt Sing; and the council of Calcutta, Mr. Cartier being then president, interposed their influence and authority at the court of Lucknow, in order to procure from the vizier just and reasonable terms of settlement. It was finally agreed, that the rajah should pay to the vizier a *peshcush*, or fine, equivalent to about 200,000*l.*, and that an annual advance of 30,000*l.* should be made to the stated tribute. A solemn

BOOK XX. 1781.

deed of confirmation was then passed by the vizier, and the rajah was invested with the government, amid the loud acclamations of a numerous and happy people.

In the year 1773, at the immediate instance of Mr. Hastings, this grant was anew confirmed and ratified by the vizier, with the additional and express provision, that no increase of tribute shall ever hereafter be demanded; and that the government of Benares shall descend, on the terms of this agreement, to the heirs of the present rajah.

The governor-general, knowing the enmity which had long subsisted between the vizier and the late rajah, declared himself "to be well convinced that the rajah's inheritance, and perhaps his life, are no longer safe than while he enjoys the Company's protection, which is his due by the ties of justice and the obligations of public faith." In the following year, 1774, the governor-general and council obtained the assignment of the sovereignty paramount of the province of Benares by treaty with the nabob vizier of Oude, "without any encroachment," to adopt the words of the act of council, "on the just rights of the rajah, or the engagements actually subsisting with him." And at the express recommendation of Mr. Hastings, by a new grant, further privileges were conferred upon the rajah—viz. the sovereignty of the mint, and the rights of criminal justice in the last resort—

the governor, in the record of this transaction in the council-book, making use of these remarkable words: "The rajah of Benares, from the situation of his country, which is a frontier to the provinces of Oude and Bahar, may be made a serviceable ALLY to the Company; but, to insure his attachment, his interest must be connected with it, which cannot be better effected than *by freeing him totally from the remains of his present vassalage, under the guarantee and protection of the Company*; and, at the same time, guarding him against any apprehensions from this government, by thus PLEDGING its FAITH that no encroachment shall ever be made on his rights by the Company." Such were, at this period, the good-will and even generosity of Mr. Hastings, that he proposed to receive the tribute of the rajah, amounting to 260,000*l.* per annum, punctually and cheerfully paid in monthly assessments—not at Benares, but at Patna, the nearest provincial station, "lest the presence of a resident should in any manner frustrate the intention of rendering the rajah INDEPENDENT—eventually reducing him," as Mr. Hastings's extreme solicitude apprehended, "to the mean and depraved state of a mere zemindar."

In this state things remained till, in the year 1777, the rajah had the misfortune to give great and mortal offence to the governor-general—an offence, however unintentional, for which his final

BOOK XX. 1781.

and utter ruin only could atone. In order to comprehend the nature of his delinquency, it is necessary to observe, that in the course of the preceding year, 1776, Mr. Hastings, whether actuated by motives of passion, caprice, or temporary discontent, had, in his private and confidential correspondence, authorised Mr. Maclean, his agent in England, to signify to the court of directors his desire to resign his office, and to request their nomination of a successor to the vacancy which would be thereby occasioned in the Supreme Council. The court, after appointing a committee to examine into the powers vested in Mr. Maclean, unanimously resolved to accept the said resignation, and named Mr. Wheeler to fill the vacancy occasioned by the same. A regular notification of this acceptance was immediately transmitted to India, and the dispatches were read in council, June 19, 1777. Mr. Hastings observing a profound silence on the subject of these dispatches, general Clavering addressed a letter to him on the following day, containing a formal requisition to the governor-general to surrender the keys of Fort William and of the Company's treasury. But Mr. Hastings, affecting surprise and indignation, peremptorily refused to comply with this demand—denying that his office was vacant, asserting that Mr. Maclean had exceeded his powers, and declaring his resolution to maintain his authority by every legal means. General Clavering, on the

contrary, conceiving the office to be irrevocably vacated, and that he himself had legally succeeded to the government, issued summonses to the other members of the council, Mr. Barwell and Mr. Francis, and in the presence of Mr. Francis took the oaths as governor-general. On the other hand, Mr. Hastings, supported by Mr. Barwell, issued directions to the commandant of the garrison of Fort William, to the provincial councils, and to the officers on the different military stations, enjoining them, at their peril, to obey no orders but such as should be signed by him or a majority of his council. Sir John Clavering, perceiving that Mr. Hastings was determined rather to risk a civil war than to resign the government, proposed a reference to the Supreme Court of Judicature; to which Mr. Hastings, confiding in the *known integrity* of sir Elijah Impey, readily consenting, a decision was given in favour of Mr. Hastings.

But this judicial confirmation of his authority by no means satisfied the haughty and revengeful spirit of the governor. Omitting, therefore, to summon sir John Clavering and Mr. Francis to the next meeting of council, the governor, supported by the faithful Barwell, entered into the council-book a formal resolve, importing, "that general Clavering having USURPED the presidency of Bengal, had thereby relinquished and vacated the office of senior counsellor and commander-in-chief of the

BOOK XX. 1781.

Company's forces—and that, for the preservation of the legality of their proceedings, the said general Clavering be not in future summoned or admitted as a member of the council." This resolve was notified to sir John Clavering, and issued in general orders to the officers civil and military of the three provinces. At the ensuing meeting of council, Mr. Francis moved the reversal of these proceedings; but Mr. Hastings declared his determination to adhere to them, saying, "That they were not the precipitate effects of an instant and passionate impulse, but the fruits of long and *temperate deliberation*, and of the strictest sense of public duty." The chief-justice Impey having his reasons for declining to support the governor in this exercise of his PUBLIC DUTY, Mr. Hastings thought proper to move a subsequent resolution in council, conformably to the advice of the judges, "That all parties be replaced in the same situation in which they stood before the receipt of the last advices from England."

Thus terminated this extraordinary business: but, most unfortunately for the rajah Cheyt Sing, on the first intelligence of general Clavering's advancement to the government, he had, with officious complaisance, deputed a *vakeel*, or ambassador, to congratulate the new governor on his accession. This, Mr. Hastings, in his subsequent justification, urges as a proof of the rajah's rooted disaffection to

the English government; and the affront thus offered to him appears to have rankled in his proud and malignant mind till he found a fit opportunity for gratifying his dire revenge. Conscious of his unlimited and uncontrollable power, the governor, who had just received intelligence of the declaration of war against France, proposed in council, July 9th, 1778, sir John Clavering being now deceased, "That the rajah of Benares should *consent* to the establishment of three battalions of sepoys, to be raised and maintained at his own expence;" and, notwithstanding the alarm of the rajah at the first intimation of this design, and the vigorous opposition of Mr. Francis and Mr. Wheeler, the resolve was carried into effect by the casting vote of the governor. The sum of five lacks of rupees, which was supposed to be equivalent to the expence of raising the three battalions, was demanded of the rajah to be paid in specie within five days; and in case of non-compliance, the resident Fowke was peremptorily enjoined to refrain from all further intercourse with him. The affrighted rajah paid the money without delay or hesitation. But the same demand being renewed the following year, he ventured to remind the governor, in a most respectful letter, "that he was encouraged to believe the former demand would not be drawn into precedent. I am therefore hopeful," said he, "you will be kindly pleased to excuse me the five lacks

BOOK XX. 1781.

now demanded, and that nothing may be demanded of me beyond the amount expressed in the *pottah*." In reply to this submissive application, the governor repeated his demand that the rajah should, without evasion or delay, pay the five lacks of rupees—in case of his refusal informing him that measures would be taken to oblige him to a compliance. The third year the same demand being made, the rajah again entreated a remission, but without effect. Mr. Hastings, however, on this occasion condescended to accept as a present from the rajah, through the medium of his vakeel in Calcutta, the sum of two lacks of rupees, which the governor, by an ambiguous mode of procedure, transferred in his own name to the Company's account, styling it, nevertheless, "money not his own, and which he neither could nor would have received but for their use." At all events, he took care to stand clear of the suspicion of taking this money as a bribe or inducement to relax in the severity of his measures; and in consequence of a few weeks delay in the payment of the five lacks, the governor-general in council imposed upon him an additional fine or mulct of 10,000*l*. These outrages failing to produce any sensible effect on the mild and timid temper of the rajah, a sudden demand was made, in addition to the tribute and subsidy, to provide a body of 2000 cavalry for the service of the Company. It was in vain that the rajah protested he

had not more than 1800 horse in his service; 500 of which, and 500 burkundasses or match-lock men, should be ready to march to whatever place they should be sent. Mr. Hastings deigned no answer whatever to this representation; but his patience being, according to his subsequent declaration, exhausted by such repeated acts of contumacy, he determined to convert the faults of the rajah into a public benefit. In a short time, the rajah, being apprised of the vengeance impending over him, offered the sum of 20 lacks as a ransom and reparation for all his offences, real or supposed. But this offer Mr. Hastings treated with scorn, being "RESOLVED to exact the sum of 500,000*l.* as a punishment for his breach of engagements with the Government of Bengal, and other acts of misconduct; and if the rajah should refuse the demand, that he would deprive him of his sovereignty."

Mr. Barwell and Mr. Francis having by this time returned to England, and Mr. Wheeler only remaining in council, the sole power and responsibility of government centred in the person of Mr. Hastings*. For the purpose of executing more

* In a letter written by Mr. Francis to the court of directors, dated December 12th, 1780, in the prospect of his speedy return to England, which took place early in the following year, he thus expressed himself:—"I shall contribute my advice and assistance as long as I continue in the council; but

BOOK XX. 1781.

effectually these pre-concerted designs, the governor determined upon a journey to Benares; previous to which he vested in himself, by a formal act, the entire powers of the Supreme Council. At the eve of his departure, however, he condescended to inform Mr. Wheeler, "that the offences of the rajah required punishment; and as his wealth was great, and the Company's exigencies pressing, it was a measure of policy and justice to exact from him a large pecuniary mulct for their relief."

On the entrance of the governor-general into the province, he was met by the rajah in person with a magnificent attendance. Nevertheless, to show his confidence in the justice of the governor, he entered alone the pinnace in which the governor had proceeded up the Ganges, and in a lowly and suppliant manner, putting his turban in his lap, entreated his favor. He was, however, repulsed with great arrogance; and, on the arrival of the governor at Benares, he received an injunction from Mr. Hastings not to enter his presence without his permission.

I will not embarrass the execution of measures which may prevail against my opinion, by a useless, perhaps a dangerous, opposition to it." On the disproportion of the supposed offences of the rajah to the actual punishment, it has been well remarked, "that if such was British justice, the miserable Hindoo might well pray that it should be exchanged for Tartarian barbarity."

Vide Mr. Fox's speech in Westminster-hall, Feb. 22, 1788.

On the succeeding day, the governor sent articles of accusation in writing to the rajah, importing, 1. That he had endeavoured to excite disorders in the government on which he depended. 2. That he had suffered with impunity the perpetration of robberies and murders, even in the streets of Benares, to the great and public scandal of the English name. 3. That he had delayed the payment of the sums required of him for the Company's service: and, 4. That he had not complied with the demand of cavalry—all of which amounted, as the governor asserted, to a direct charge of disaffection and *infidelity* to the government on which the rajah depended—And to these articles of impeachment he demanded an immediate answer. On the evening of the same day, the rajah sent in his defence, denying, in the most positive manner, the truth of the aforesaid articles. "My enemies," said he, "with a view to my ruin, have made false representations to you. Now that, *happily for me*, you have yourself arrived at this place, you will be able to ascertain all the circumstances: 1. relative to the horse; 2. to my people going to Calcutta; 3. the dates of the receipts of the particular sums above mentioned. I have never swerved in the smallest degree from my duty to you. It remains with you to decide on all these matters. I am in every thing your slave. What is just I have represented to you. May your prosperity increase!"—

BOOK XX. 1781.

At this reply the governor expressed great wrath, declaring it to "be less a vindication of the rajah than a recrimination on him; and that it was couched in terms of defiance, manifesting a dangerous spirit of independency."

In consequence of the rajah's offensive and audacious conduct, Mr. Hastings conceived himself obliged to adopt some decisive plan---and an order was therefore immediately issued to put the rajah under an arrest in his own palace. To this indignity the rajah, shocked as he appeared to be, submitted with the most passive humility: "He hoped," he said, "that the governor would allow him a subsistence in consideration of his father's services—but as for his zemindary, his forts, and his treasures, he was ready to lay them at his feet, and his life if required." Being at once dejected with the ignominy and dismayed with the danger of his situation, surrounded by a guard of sepoys with their swords drawn, he wrote to the governor—"Whatever be your pleasure, do it with your own hands. I am your slave. What occasion can there be for a guard? It depends on you alone to take away, or not to take away, the country out of my hands."

The highest alarm and astonishment being excited in the city of Benares by this arrest of the rajah, great numbers of people assembled round the palace, nor could the earnest and repeated en-

treaties of their prince restrain them from acts of violence—and believing the person of the rajah, who was much beloved by his subjects, to be exposed to extreme hazard, they at length broke through the enclosure, and, falling suddenly upon the guard of sepoys and English officers, nearly the whole were cut to pieces. In the tumult the rajah made his escape over the walls of his palace by means of a cord formed of turbans tied together; and, crossing the Ganges in a boat, fled to a place of refuge, whence he directed a suppliant letter to Mr. Hastings, to which the governor affirmed "he did not think it becoming him to reply." On the contrary, leaving Benares with precipitation, he ordered the rajah's troops to be every-where attacked, as if the rajah had been in avowed and open rebellion. So inconsiderable, notwithstanding, was the force by which he was attended, that the governor acknowledged the fate of the British empire in India to be exposed, by these daring, or, to speak more properly, these rash and frantic measures, to the most imminent danger; for the fate of the empire he supposed at this critical moment to be closely connected with that of his own person. "Mean as its substance may be, its accidental qualities," says the governor-general, "were equivalent to those which, like the characters of a talisman in the Arabian mythology, formed the essence of the state itself." By a confession humiliating in proportion

BOOK XX. 1781.

to its truth he declares, "*that* EVERY STATE *around would have* RISEN IN ARMS *against the* ENGLISH; *and* EVERY SUBJECT *of their own dominion would, according to their several abilities, have become an* ENEMY." These few lines contain perhaps the bitterest satire ever written upon any government, or upon any system of despotism and oppression that has impudently assumed the name *.

The troops in the province of Benares being, however, quickly reinforced, the territories of the rajah were completely reduced. The rajah having himself made his escape to the camp of the Mahrattas, orders were given by Mr. Hastings to seize upon the fortress of Bidjegur, the residence of the Rannee Pauna, mother of Cheyt Sing, represented as a woman singularly amiable and virtuous, and against whom no delinquency was even pretended. The treasures of the rannee being very considerable, she was desirous to capitulate upon conditions, in order to save something from the wreck of her fortunes. But Mr. Hastings wrote to the commander, major Popham, "I think every demand

* The records of antiquity seem indeed to furnish no very distant parallel in the ingenuous avowal of the historian Livy respecting the Italian states subject to the domination of Rome. "Nunquam isti populi, nisi quum deerit ad quem desciscant, a nobis non deficient."

Liv. lib. xxxi. § 7.

the rannee has made to you, except that of safety and respect for her person, unreasonable.—I apprehend that she will contrive to *defraud* the captors of a considerable part of the booty, by being suffered to retire without examination. But this is your consideration, and not mine—As to making any conditions with her for a provision, I will never consent to it." In a second letter he says, "If she delays the surrender beyond the term of twenty-four hours, it is my positive injunction that you put a stop to the negotiation, *and on no pretext renew it.* If she disappoints or trifles with me, I shall consider it as a wanton affront and indignity, which I can never forgive.—Nor will I grant her ANY CONDITIONS WHATEVER; but leave her exposed to those dangers which she has chosen to risk, rather than trust to the CLEMENCY and GENEROSITY of *our* government."

BOOK XX. 1781.

The fortress being accordingly surrendered within the time specified, the articles of the capitulation, by which an allowance of 15 per cent. was reserved to the rannee, were nevertheless shamefully and outrageously broken, the person of the rannee and her attendants grossly insulted, and their effects plundered, notwithstanding the efforts and representations of major Popham, the commander, a man of honor and humanity. But the governor, wholly intent upon the vindication of his conduct, was now engaged in causing a great number of af-

BOOK XX. 1781.

fidavits and depositions, aiming to prove the existence of a conspiracy against the English government, to be taken by sir Elijah Impey, who *happened* at this time, in the course of *an excursion for the benefit of his health*, to be fortunately resident at Benares.

In his subsequent famous narrative of this transaction to the court of directors, Mr. Hastings hesitated not to assert, "that the rajah of Benares had no claim to the title or privileges of a prince—that the deeds which passed between him and the board upon the transfer of the zemindary in 1775 were not to be understood to bear the quality and force of a treaty between equal states—that the payments to be made by him were not a tribute, but a rent—that, being nothing more than a *common zemindar*, he owed a personal allegiance and *an implicit and unreserved obedience* to the authority of the Company, at the forfeiture of his zemindary, and even of his life and property *."

* Perhaps the records of history do not exhibit a position more enormously extravagant, than that the sovereign of a province in the interior parts of Hindostan, exercising the powers of government over a happy and consenting people, should owe *implicit and unreserved obedience* to a Company of traders inhabiting a *barbarous island* on the other side of the globe. In vindication of the arbitrary and excessive fine of 500,000*l.* imposed by Mr. Hastings on the rajah, the governor, in his MINUTES of DEFENCE, pretends, "that, notwithstanding the privileges guaranteed to the rajah, the *right of fine*

Conceiving it possible, nevertheless, that these extraordinary positions might stagger the faith of some perverse or sceptical persons, he thought proper to subjoin an argument which could not fail to operate in his favor, viz. "That, if he *had* acted with an unwarrantable rigor, and even INJUSTICE, towards Cheyt Sing; yet, first, if he did believe that extraordinary means were necessary, and those exerted with a strong hand, to preserve the Company's interest from sinking under the accumulated weight that oppressed them—or, 2dly, if he saw a political necessity for curbing the overgrown

BOOK XX. 1781.

was expressly reserved to the Company:"—and he affirms this right to be woven into the texture of the Mogul government. If so, it is evident that all stipulations for the payment of a specific tribute are trifling and ridiculous. But his authorities most egregiously fail him. 1. He tells us that the vizier Sujah ul Dowla levied a fine on the death of the father for the investiture of the son.—True: but the agreement was, in this case, on both sides optional—the zemindary or principality not being hereditary in the family of Bulwant Sing till so declared by the subsequent treaty of 1773. 2. He alleges, that when the right of the mint was transferred to the rajah, it was articled, that the proper weight and standard should be preserved by the rajah, under pain of forfeiting the mint, and being *liable to any penalty* the board might think proper to impose. But in this, as in the former instance, the rajah voluntarily accepted the grant with the condition annexed. Yet from these premises Mr. Hastings preposterously infers that the enormous fine arbitrarily imposed by him was "consonant to the engagements between the Company and the rajah."

BOOK XX. 1781.

power of a great member of their dominion, and to make it contribute to the relief of their pressing exigences—that his error would be excusable, as prompted by an *excess of zeal* for the Company's interest operating with too strong a bias upon his judgment.

After the deposition of the rajah Cheyt Sing, Mr. Hastings, in virtue of the commission with which he had invested himself, exercised an authority over the province of Benares nothing less than despotic. Setting aside all former agreements, although evidently made with the rajahs not in their personal but political capacity, he increased the tribute, or stated rent-charge, from 260,000 to 430,000*l.* per annum. Having bestowed the government on a youth called Mehip Narrain, a descendant by the mother from the rajah Bulwant Sing, he, in addition to the tribute, imposed such heavy and grievous duties on merchandize, as threatened the absolute annihilation of their commerce; charging moreover pensions on the revenues of the province, and sending large bodies of troops into the territory of Benares, to be maintained by the oppressed and impoverished inhabitants.

The father of the new rajah, Durbitzee Sing, who was appointed guardian and administrator to his son, was by Mr. Hastings in a short time deposed from his office, on a vague and general charge of mal-administration and DEFICIENCY in his PAY-

MENTS, and thrown into prison. His property being confiscated, and his person endangered, he in a short time died overwhelmed with distress and ruin. BOOK XX. 1781.

"When a new system was to be formed with the successor of Cheyt Sing," says Mr. Hastings, "I saw no objection to making the Company's interest my *first principle of action*. The easy accumulation of too much wealth had been Cheyt Sing's ruin. It had buoyed him up with extravagant and ill-founded notions of independency, which I much wished to discourage in the future rajah. Some part, therefore, of the superabundant produce of the country I turned into the coffers of the sovereign, i. e. the Company, by an augmentation of the tribute."

Here the grand object of the British government in India, as administered by Mr. Hastings, is openly and undisguisedly avowed—*The filling the Company's coffers with money* was by him held to be the *first principle of action*. Happy would it indeed have been for the inhabitants of Hindostan, if even this abominable and infamous principle had been pursued by rational and politic means, such as would have secured, unimpaired, the *sources of prosperity*, though for the mere purpose of subsequent plunder and emolument.

On the deposition of Durbitzee Sing from the regency, a man of obscure origin, one Jagher Deo

BOOK XX. 1781.

Sheo, was exalted to this dangerous pre-eminence. This new minister, warned by the fate of his predecessor, extorted the tribute money and other duties imposed by the governor with the most rigorous severity. The trade and cultivation of the province having in a short time declined in an incredible degree, the resident at Benares declared to the board at Calcutta, that the collection of the revenue was become very difficult. But of this fact the governor-general himself gave the most decisive attestation. Passing through the province of Benares, in his progress to Lucknow, in the spring of 1784, he declares, in a letter addressed to the council at Calcutta, "that he was *fatigued* with the clamors of the discontented inhabitants. Though the drought of the preceding summer might contribute to heighten the distress, the governor acknowledges there is reason to believe that the cause existed principally in a defective, if not corrupt and oppressive, administration. The avowed principle (says he) on which the present administration acts, is, that the whole sum fixed for the revenue of the province *must* be collected, and that the deficiency arising in places where the crops have failed must be supplied from the resources of others where the industry of the cultivators has been more successfully exerted *.

* No doubt, if the sum demanded by the Company *must* be paid, the administration of Benares was sensible that it

"In the management of the customs, the exorbitant rates exacted by an arbitrary valuation of the goods, the practice of exacting duties twice on the same goods, first from the seller and afterwards from the buyer, and the vexatious disputes and delays drawn on the merchants by these oppressions, were loudly complained of. Under such circumstances, we are not to wonder if the merchants of

must first be collected. According to the plan of Mr. Hastings, therefore, the whole of the profit would accrue to the one, and the whole of the odium devolve on the other. This was worse than the division, which, agreeably to the antient fable, was so artfully made of the dates and walnuts between the votary and the god. How strong is the contrast presented in the description given by the rajah Cheyt Sing himself of the beautiful territory of Benares, compared with that drawn in such frightful colors by the pen of Mr. Hastings! "My fields," says this beneficent sovereign, "are cultivated; my towns and villages full of inhabitants; my country is a garden, and my ryots (husbandmen) are happy. The principal merchants of India, from the security of my government, resort to my capital, and make it their residence. It is the bank of India, and contains the treasures of the Mahrattas, the Jaiks, the Saiks, the native and European nations. The traveller and the stranger, from one end of my country to the other, lay down their burdens and sleep in security." But when Mr. Hastings passed a few years afterwards through those districts, famine and misery stalked hand in hand through uncultivated fields and deserted villages."

Vide speech of Mr. Grey, in Westminster-hall, Feb. 25, 1788.

BOOK XX. 1781.

foreign countries are discouraged from resorting to Benares.

"One evil I must mention, because it has been verified by my own observation, and is of that kind which reflects an UNMERITED REPROACH on our general and national character. When I was at Buxar, the resident, at my desire, enjoined the naib to appoint creditable people to every town through which our route lay, to *persuade and encourage* the inhabitants to remain in their houses, promising to give them guards, as I approached, for their protection—But, to my great disappointment, I found every place through which I passed ABANDONED. I am sorry to add, that from Buxar to the opposite boundary I have seen NOTHING but TRACES of COMPLETE DEVASTATION in EVERY VILLAGE.—I cannot help remarking, that, except the city of Benares, the province is in effect without a government. The administration of the province is misconducted, and the people oppressed; trade discouraged, and the revenue in danger of a rapid decline from the violent appropriation of its means."

Such is the picture, drawn by the hand of the master artist, of the blessed effects of British government in India!—In order to remedy these evils, the governor proposed to eject the new administrator from his office; which was soon afterwards ac-

cordingly done, and a temporary administration for the government of the province substituted, without however making any provision for a reduction of taxes, or a remission of tribute. The oppression of Jagher Deo Sheo being doubtless, in the eyes of the governor, a crime of much less magnitude than the impunctuality of his predecessor Durbitzee Sing, he escaped with a simple dismission, without incurring the penalties of fine, imprisonment, and death. BOOK XX. 1781.

If the conduct of Mr. Hastings in relation to the province of Benares should be deemed liable to serious exception, it is to be feared that an examination of his system of policy respecting the vizieriate of Oude, a far more extensive scene of operation, will tend but little to redeem his character. It must suffice, for this is not a professed history of the administration of Mr. Hastings, lightly to touch upon a few leading points of this too fertile topic.

The terms of the treaty concluded in the year 1765 with the vizier Sujah ul Dowla, by the late lord Clive, left that great and powerful province in a considerable measure dependent upon the Company. From this fatal period the decay and desolation of the vizieriate commenced: for, to come into contact with the English government seemed universally and instantly to produce a sort of political paralysis. The annual revenue, which was estimated at more than three millions, had sunk in the

BOOK XX. 1781.

year 1779 to less than one million and a half. The vizier had contracted to maintain at his own expence a brigade of the Company's troops in his service, for so long time as he might deem them necessary for the defence of his country. But the court of directors, in their letter to the governor and council of the 15th of December 1775, expressly say, "If you intend to exert your influence, first to induce the vizier to acquiesce in your proposal, and afterwards to compel him to keep the troops in his pay during your pleasure, your intents are unjust, and a correspondent conduct would reflect great dishonor on the Company." But Mr. Hastings had long learnt to hold the orders of his superiors in contempt, and to set their authority at defiance. The nabob Asoph ul Dowla, who had succeeded his father in the vizieriate, February 1775, making very earnest supplication to be relieved from this burden, which the reduced state of his revenue rendered him utterly unable to support, Mr. Hastings without hesitation declared "the relief desired to be totally inadmissible;"—further affirming, "that the *tone* in which the demands of the nabob were asserted gave cause for the most alarming suspicions;" though it is difficult to conceive how language more submissive and humble could have been adopted.

"During three years (says the nabob) the expence occasioned by the troops in brigade, and others commanded by European officers, has much

distressed the support of my household, insomuch that the allowances made to the seraglio and children of the deceased nabob have been reduced to one-fourth of what it had been. The attendants and servants of my court have received no pay for two years past, and applications from my father's private creditors are daily pressing upon me. All these difficulties I have for three years struggled through, and found this consolation therein, that it was complying with the pleasure of the Honorable Company, and in the hope that the Supreme Council would make inquiry, from impartial persons, into my distressed situation: but I am now FORCED to a representation. From the great increase of expence, the revenues were necessarily farmed out at a high rate, and deficiencies followed yearly. The country and cultivation are ABANDONED; and as to the European troops, the nabob declares that they brought nothing but confusion into the affairs of his government, and were entirely their own masters."

BOOK XX. 1791.

Far from being moved by these representations, the governor-general declared, in his instructions transmitted to the resident Purling at the court of Lucknow, "that the nabob stands engaged to our government to maintain the English armies formed for the protection of his dominions, and that it was OUR part, and not HIS, to judge and determine in what manner and at what time these shall be re-

BOOK XX. 1781.

duced and withdrawn." And in a minute of consultation on this subject, at the council board, Mr. Hastings asserted "that the arrangement of measures between the British government and the native powers of India must, in case of disagreement about the necessity thereof, be decided by the STRONGEST."

This being his avowed system of policy, it can excite no wonder that the government and country of Oude should proceed, with rapid and accelerated progress, to the extremity of political distress and ruin. Mr. Hastings himself, towards the close of his administration, thus, in a minute of council, expresses his sense of the situation of the vizier:—"Our alliance has proved the extinction of his sovereignty, and the impoverishment of his country and revenue."

In the year 1781, a commission of delegation having been executed at Calcutta, investing Mr. Hastings with the entire powers of the Supreme Council, the governor-general resolved to visit the province in person. At a meeting which took place at Chunar, on the confines of Benares, in the month of September, a secret treaty was concluded by the governor with the vizier, containing several articles of an extraordinary nature: and it has been said, that no treaty ever contained so much treachery in so small a compass. By this time the claims upon the nabob, on various grounds and pretences, arose

to the enormous sum of 2,785,000*l.* sterling, which was considerably more than two years net produce of the nabob's revenues. In order to liquidate this debt, Mr. Hastings urged the nabob, and an article to this effect was inserted in the treaty of Chunar, to a general resumption of the jaghires, or government assignments upon land, throughout the province, to the amount of many hundred thousand pounds annual rent, including the provisions made by the former nabob-viziers for the princes of their blood, and the ancient friends and dependents of their family. The estates thus confiscated were re-let on rack rents, and at the same time mortgaged to rich bankers of Benares, to supply the immediate wants of the English government. BOOK XX. 1781.

A GIFT from the vizier of ten lacks of rupees, amounting to considerably upwards of 100,000*l.*, was also at this period accepted by Mr. Hastings; which being, as he confessed, a sum of too great magnitude to be concealed, he, after some deliberation, thought proper to apprise the court of directors of this violation of *their* commands, and of his *own* solemn engagement. Declaring the money in question to be transferred to the account of the Company, he nevertheless had the presumption to express his hope "that, in consideration of his long and faithful services, and the sums he had expended from his private fortune upon their account, they would permit him to apply this donation to his own use."

BOOK XX. 1781.

The confusion and distress consequent on the late violent expedient of resumption, and other devices of extortion, it is impossible in adequate terms to describe. The whole fabric of civil government seemed to totter, and verge upon annihilation and anarchy. The regular authority of the magistracy, and the administration of justice, totally ceased; and no power was visible but that of the farmers of the revenue, attended by bodies of troops to enforce the collections. The country was declared by one of the nabob's ministers to be 'a speaking picture of famine and woe.'—"From the total want of police," says the resident Bristow, "hardly a day escapes but I am informed of some tragical event, whereof the bare recital is shocking to humanity:" and he confesses that his feelings are sensibly hurt, and his compassion strongly excited, by the disgraceful and miserable state of poverty to which the brothers of the nabob are reduced. From three of these princes, Mirza Ali, Mirza Hyder, and Mirza Sief, the resident received an affecting representation, or memorial, in which they say, "Our situation is not fit to be told—For two years we have not received an *hubba* on account of our *tuncaw* (assignment on the revenue). It is surprising, having such a friend as you, our situation is arrived at that pass that we should be in distress for bread and clothing——YET we are the SONS of Sujah ul Dowla!" But the heart of Mr. Hastings

never in any instance counteracted the designs of his head, and the wretched inhabitants of Oude were destined to see yet greater abominations than these. BOOK XX. 1781.

The mother and wife of the late nabob kept their court at the city of Fyzabad, where, after the custom of the East, they lived in much magnificence, having the charge of educating the numerous offspring of the deceased sovereign, and of maintaining a household consisting of 2000 persons. To support this vast expence, the nabob had left them a large proportion of his treasures, and had settled upon them *jaghires* suitable to their high rank and dignity, and to the importance of the trust committed to them; solemnly and earnestly recommending at the same time the interests of his family to the guardian care and protection of the Company, by whom their possessions had been subsequently and authentically guarantied. By the treaty of Chunar, nevertheless, the present nabob was authorised by Mr. Hastings to seize upon the jaghires, or landed estates, of these illustrious relatives, and to allow them *pensions* equal to the amount; and this the governor pretended was conformable to the Mahommedan law*. The nabob appearing, neverthe-

* Soon after the decease of Sujah ul Dowla, a dispute arose between Asoph ul Dowla his successor, and the Begums his relations, respecting the proportion of treasure which legally

BOOK XX. 1781.

less, manifestly reluctant to carry this odious project into execution, Mr. Hastings signified his pleasure to *his own* resident at Lucknow, Mr. Middleton, "that as this measure originated with the English, and was intended for their benefit, the execution was to be FORCED upon him,"—although the express words of the treaty of Chunar were merely, "that the nabob be *permitted* to resume such jaghires as he may think necessary."

In order to impart some color of justice to this outrage, depositions the most futile and ridiculous were, as recently at Benares, extra-judicially made

appertained to them; and the board of Calcutta, taking cognizance of this matter, unanimously decided (sir John Clavering, colonel Monson, and Mr. Francis, then sitting at the board) that by the Mahommedan law the princesses were entitled only to the property of their husbands within the zenana or seraglio where they resided. The Begums cheerfully acquiesced in this decision; in conquence of which, a vast sum was refunded by them, and their remaining treasure secured by a formal guarantee, in which Mr. Hastings concurred, though, as he insinuates, without responsibility, "being then an inefficient member of the board." But for Mr. Hastings to appeal to the KORAN as a sanction for his subsequent enormities, is, to adopt the language of Mr. Sheridan, in his famous speech of February 7, 1787, "as if there were something in the institutions of Mahommed that made it meritorious for a Christian to be a savage—that rendered it criminal to treat the inhabitants of India with humanity or mercy—that even made it impious in a son not to plunder his mother!"

before sir Elijah Impey, who unexpectedly presented himself in the course of his progress, after leaving Benares, first at Chunar, then at Lucknow. For this magistrate so miserably degraded his character and station as to become a principal agent in this business. And such was the silent celerity of his movements, that the chief-justice has been with humorous allusion compared to the ghost in the tragedy of Hamlet, exclaiming in almost every quarter at the same instant, "SWEAR!" These affidavits, founded on vague and incoherent rumors, were designed to prove, that the princesses of Oude fomented the insurrection at Benares, and were even engaged in a plot for the dethronement of their own son, and the utter extirpation of the English nation. Very little stress, however, was at this crisis placed by Mr. Hastings on the validity of these proofs, which were evidently calculated to answer a different and distant purpose*.

BOOK XX. 1781.

* Major Marsack, in the course of his examination at the bar of the house of commons, May 8, 1786, being asked whether there was any reason to believe that the Begums had, in conjunction with other powers, formed a plan for the extirpation of the English, answered, "that such a thing was too absurd to be credited by any person knowing the position of affairs at that time in India." He acknowledged, "that a universal disaffection prevailed throughout all the provinces of Oude, owing to the measures of our government, and the unheard-of oppressions of colonel Hannay, the commander of the English troops; the effects of which appeared in deserted vil-

BOOK XX. 1781.

"Your pleasure," says Mr. Middleton, "respecting the Begums I have learnt from sir Elijah Impey.—Finding the nabob wavering in his determination about the resumption of the jaghires, I this day ordered the necessary *perwannahs* for that purpose. But before they were transcribed I received a message from the nabob, entreating that I would withhold them till the morning. As it is possible that the nabob, seeing the business will at all events be done, may make it an act of his own, I have consented to *indulge* him in this request."

The nabob at length, "rather than suffer it to appear that the point had been carried in opposition to his will, yielded a nominal acquiescence, and issued his own *perwannahs**," but with extreme reluctance, and, to use the language of Mr. Middleton, "after much trifling evasion and puerile excuses;"—the irresistible effusions, no doubt, of that natural affection which it is so difficult totally to eradicate from the human heart, but which by men hardened in villany is regarded as fond and childish imbecility. "At the same time the nabob declared," says Mr.

lages and uncultivated tracts of land from one end of the country to the other.—That on colonel Hannay's departure for Benares, the inhabitants arose in a tumultuous manner; and he professed his belief that all men under their situation and circumstances, who possessed the feelings and spirit of men, would have extirpated us, if in their power."

* Letter of Mr. Middleton, Dec. 9th, 1781.

Middleton, "both to me and his ministers, that it was an ACT of COMPULSION." BOOK XX. 1781.

In a subsequent letter Mr. Middleton informs the governor, that the vizier, wishing to evade the measure of resumption, suggested to him, that the debt of the Company might be better and more expeditiously liquidated by taking the amount at once from the treasures left by his father. With all the eager rapacity of a bird of prey, which in the act of seizing with outstretched beak its helpless quarry aims to grasp another victim also in its talons, Mr. Hastings, still insisting upon the resumption of the jaghires, declared his resolution also to seize the treasures; enjoining upon the agent Middleton, under menaces of a dreadful responsibility, the execution of this barbarous act, in the following peremptory terms:—"You yourself ought to be personally present. You must not allow any negotiation or forbearance, but must prosecute BOTH SERVICES until the Begums are at the entire mercy of the nabob*."—In conformity to this order, the

* This unexpected resolution of the governor-general at once to resume the jaghires, and to seize the treasures, seems to have shaken for a time at least the *fortitude* of the resident Middleton, who, in a *private* letter, dated from Lucknow, Dec. 28, 1781, to Mr. Hastings then at Benares, thus expresses himself—"If your new demand is to be insisted upon, which your letter seems to portend, I must beg your precise orders upon it; as, from the difficulties I have within these few days

BOOK XX. 1781.

British resident, at the head of a body of troops, accompanied by the terrified vizier, marched to Fyzabad, and with little or no resistance stormed first the town and then the castle. The chief officers of the household, the eunuchs Jewar Ali Khan and Bahar Ali Khan, persons of distinguished rank, who had been in high trust and favor with the late nabob, were ignominiously thrust into confinement, in order to extort from them the discovery of the treasures and effects committed to their care. In consequence of these severities, the Bhow Begum, i. e. the mother princess, at length consented to the surrender of her treasures, hid in the most se-

experienced in carrying the points you have enjoined with the nabob, I have the best grounds for believing that he would consider it a direct breach of the late agreement, and totally reject the proposal as such; and I must own to you, that in his present fermented state of mind I could expect nothing less than despair and a declared rupture. The wresting Ferruckabad, Kyrague, and Fyzoola Khan's country from his government, (for in that light I can faithfully assure you he views the measures adopted in respect to those countries,) together with the resumption of all the jaghires, so much against his inclination, have already brought the nabob to a persuasion, that nothing less than his destruction, or the annihilation of every shadow of his power, is meant; and all my labors to convince him to the contrary have proved abortive. A settled melancholy has seized him, and his health is reduced beyond conception: and I do most solemnly believe that the march of four regiments of sepoys towards Lucknow, under whatever circumstances it might be represented, would be considered by him as a force ultimate-

cret recesses of the palace, to the amount of the bond debt due from the nabob to the Company. But avarice is insatiable as the grave. Another demand of 120,000*l.* was made for the balance pretended to be due *since* the execution of the bond: and to enforce compliance, the two eunuchs were, by order of the resident Middleton, committed to close custody, put in irons, and kept from all food. To raise this sum, great part of the furniture of the palaces, the jewels, and other effects of the Begums, even to the wardrobe, were disposed of by public sale.

ly to be used in securing his person.—I earnestly entreat your orders may be explicit and positive, that I may clearly know what LENGTHS you would wish me to proceed in carrying them into execution."

In a very short time, however, Mr. Middleton completely recovered himself, and in a second private letter accompanying a public one, dated Dec. 30, he says, "I have this day answered your public letter in the form you seemed to expect. If you wish the matter to be otherwise understood than I have taken up and stated it, I need not say I shall be ready to conform to WHATEVER you may prescribe.—If I have misconceived your design, I am truly sorry for it: however, it is not too late to correct the error, and I am ready to undertake, *and, God willing!* to carry through, WHATEVER you may, on receipt of my public letter, tell me is your final resolve." Mr. Middleton, therefore, had now "screwed his courage to the sticking place," and was fully prepared and determined to go ALL LENGTHS at the instigation of his excellent patron.

BOOK XX. 1781.

Fully apprised of the distressful situation of the princesses, Mr. Hastings could, nevertheless, write at this period to the resident Middleton as follows:—"The nabob having consented to the resumption of the jaghires held by the Begums, and to the confiscation of their treasures, and thereby involved my own name, and the CREDIT of the COMPANY, in a participation of both measures, I have a right to require and insist on the complete execution of them, and I look to you for their execution, declaring that I hold you accountable for it*."

It may easily be imagined, that the pensions allotted to the Begums and other jagheerdars, in lieu of their jaghires, would be very ill and defectively

* Mr. Hastings has indeed in his defence alleged, that he was *ignorant* of many transactions imputed to him respecting this business. But of those which were in any degree material to substantiate the charge of criminality, he could NOT plead ignorance. "If Mr. Middleton did not give him an exact account of the groans that were heaved, the tears that were shed, the weight of the fetters, or the depth of the dungeon, he stated," says Mr. Sheridan (vide his Speech, June 1788), "every important step that was taken in the progress and winding-up of this relentless tragedy." In fact, nothing of moment was done without the express command of Mr. Hastings; for even Mr. Middleton, a man little troubled with "compunctious visitings of nature," discovered no symptoms of alacrity in the execution of his direful commission.

paid. In the month of March, 1782, the officer on duty at Fyzabad, major Gilpin, wrote to the resident:—"The women belonging to the Khord Mohul," (or interior palace) "are in want of every necessary of life, and are driven to that desperation, that they threaten to throw themselves from the walls of the zenana." In a subsequent letter it is said, "The women in the zenana assembled last night on the tops of the building, crying in a most lamentable manner for food."—And in a third letter—"The repeated cries of the women for subsistence were truly melancholy. They beg most piteously for liberty, that they may earn their daily bread by laborious servitude, or to be released from their misery by immediate death." At length the Company's resident, Mr. Bristow, ventured, of his own authority, very little to the satisfaction of Mr. Hastings, to order the removal of the troops, and the release of the prisoners Bahar and Jewar Ali Khan, who had now been confined and in irons for near twelve months. "The quivering lips," says the commander of the troops at Fyzabad, speaking of their enlargement, "and the tears of joy stealing down the poor men's cheeks, was a scene truly affecting."

BOOK XX. 1781.

The distresses of the zenana nevertheless still continued, and the women, breaking by frantic violence the sacred bounds of the palace, exhibited themselves in this state of degradation and despair,

BOOK XX. 1781.

to the astonished inhabitants of Fyzabad, in the public bazar or market-place of that great and populous city. But after this act of desperation they do not appear to have been permitted to suffer equal extremity.

In a letter from the Bhow Begum to the resident Bristow, this unfortunate princess says: "An accusation was framed against me, which I had never conceived even in idea, of rendering assistance to rajah Cheyt Sing. Having seized my head eunuchs, Jewar Ali Khan and Bahar Ali Khan, they obliged them to sign a bond for sixty lacks of rupees. They were thrown into prison with fetters about their feet, and denied food and water. I, who had never even in my dreams experienced such an oppression, gave up all I had to preserve my honor and dignity.—My sufferings did not terminate here. The disturbances of colonel Hannay and Mr. Gordon were made a pretence for seizing my jaghire. The state of the matter is this: When colonel Hannay was by Mr. Hastings ordered to march to Benares, during the troubles of Cheyt Sing, the colonel, *who had plundered the whole country*, was incapable of proceeding, from the union of thousands of zemindars, who had seized this favorable opportunity. They harassed Mr. Gordon near Juniyard, and opposed his march. Mr. Gordon forded the river upon his elephant. In the mean time a letter was received by me from colonel Hannay, desir-

ing me to escort Mr. Gordon to Fyzabad. As my friendship for the English was always sincere, I readily complied, and sent some companies of nejeebs to escort Mr. Gordon and all his effects to Fyzabad; where, having provided for his entertainment, I effected his junction with colonel Hannay. The letters of thanks I received from both these gentlemen are still in my possession. But is it not extraordinary that, notwithstanding the justness of my cause, nobody relieves my misfortunes?" BOOK XX. 1781.

In the letter of colonel Hannay, referred to by the Begum, that officer, in the oriental phraseology, says: "Begum Saib of exalted dignity! Your exalting letter, fraught with grace and benevolence, I had the honor to receive in a fortunate moment. Your faithful servant reposeth his most unbounded hopes and expectation upon your highness, that Mr. Gordon may arrive at Fyzabad without apprehension or danger." And Mr. Gordon expresses himself in a still higher strain of respect and gratitude—"Begum Saib of exalted dignity and generosity! Your gracious letter, in answer to the petition of your servant from Goondah, exalted me. The welfare of your servant is entirely owing to your favor and benevolence. Continue to exalt and honor me with your gracious letters—May the sun of prosperity continually shine!"

When the intelligence of these astonishing trans-

BOOK XX. 1781.

actions reached the court of directors, that assembly, in which a high sense of honor and virtue, *occasionally discoverable*, too unavailingly contended against the suggestions of ambition and interest, ordered a letter to be written to the governor and council, in which they say, with reference to the iniquitous and enormous plan of seizure and resumption, "WE HOPE and TRUST, for the honor of the British nation, that this measure appeared FULLY JUSTIFIED in the eyes of all Hindostan. It no where appears, from the papers *at present* in our possession, that they, the Begums, excited any commotions previous to the imprisonment of Cheyt Sing, and only armed themselves in consequence of that transaction; and it is probable, that such a conduct proceeded from motives of self-defence, under an apprehension that they themselves might likewise be laid under unwarrantable contributions." And the court expressly ordered, that if, upon future inquiry, the charge should prove to be unfounded, the governor and council should use their influence with the vizier that their jaghires should be restored to them.

If the directors of the Company really entertained any serious doubt as to the light in which this daring act of atrocity appeared in the view of the inhabitants of Hindostan, it would be instantly decided by the testimony of major Brown, Mr. Hastings's *own resident* at the court of Dehli, who, in a letter ad-

dressed to Mr. Bristow, resident at Oude, informs him, that in a conference he had lately held with Mirza Shuffee Khan, prime minister of the Mogul, speaking of the situation of the Begums, that minister told him, "There is not a man in HINDOSTAN who will attribute the act to the vizier of Oude, but EVERY ONE will fix the odium on the English, who might easily, by the influence they so largely exercise, have prevented such unnatural conduct. This step," he said, "must DESTROY ALL CONFIDENCE in the English nation throughout Hindostan, and excite the bitterest resentment in all those who by blood are connected with the house of Sufdar Jung. If," said this generous mussulman, "the vizier can so little regard his honor, or his duty, as to wish to disgrace his father's mother for a sum of money, let him plunder her of all she has, and send her safe to Dehli or Agra; and, poor as I am, I will furnish subsistence for her, which she shall possess with security, though it cannot be adequate to her rank." As to the INQUIRY alluded to by the court of directors, Mr. Hastings positively refused compliance, alleging "that it was in effect an order for the justification and acquittal of the Begums; and that it would be productive of evils greater than any which exist in the consequences which have already taken place, and which time had almost obliterated. "Let us," said the governor in his minute of council, "at least permit them to be

BOOK XX. 1781.

BOOK XX. 1781.

judges of their own feelings, and prefer their complaints before we offer to redress them. The MAJESTY OF JUSTICE ought to be approached with solicitation, not to descend to provoke or invite it." And wrapped in the veil of conscious innocence, he declares with calm and intrepid countenance, "that, whatever may happen of the events which he dreads, he had at least this consolation remaining, that, in the annals of the natives of India, HE shall not be remembered amongst their oppressors."

His general system of policy must therefore be presumed in his own opinion right; yet, in his dispatch of April 30, 1784, he passes the severest and most unequivocal censure upon it, by recommending to the court of directors, "as his last and ultimate hope, that their wisdom would put a final period to the ruinous and disreputable system of INTERFERENCE, whether avowed or secret." And he hesitates not to assert, in his subsequent dispatch of October 1784, a very short time before his departure from India, and which may therefore be regarded as a sort of dying confession extorted by the resistless force of truth, "that to no other purposes than those of VENGEANCE and CORRUPTION will agents armed with authority exercise their powers."

The affairs of Oude cannot with propriety be dismissed, without transiently noticing the case of the province of Ferruckabad, a territory, like Benares,

depending upon the vizieriate. Ahmed Khan, late nabob of Ferruckabad, in the war between the vizier and the Company, had, as well as Bulwant Sing, showed a marked and too partial predilection for the English interest. After the commencement of the system of peace, alliance, and *subsidy*, the tribute due to the vizier from this province was assigned over to the English in part of payment; and a *sezawall*, i. e. a sequestrator, appointed by the vizier, at the instance of the English government, in order to enforce the collection; which, in consequence of this arrangement, was paid, not to the nabob, but to the English resident at Oude. The effects of this plan soon became visible. BOOK XX. 1781.

In the month of May, 1780, Mr. Hastings stated to the board at Calcutta the condition of the province in the following terms:—"To the total want of all order, regulation, or authority in this government, it may, among many other obvious causes, no doubt be owing, that the country of Ferruckabad is become an almost entire waste, without cultivation or inhabitants; that the capital, which but a very short time ago was distinguished as one of the most populous and opulent commercial cities in Hindostan, at present exhibits nothing but scenes of the most wretched desolation and misery—the nabob himself scarcely commanding the means of bare subsistence." On account of the hardships and indignities to which the nabob was

BOOK XX. 1781.

subjected by the conduct of the sezawall, and of which he had preferred frequent complaints, Mr. Hastings proposed the removal of the sequestrator, and the appointment of an English resident in his room, declaring "that a LOCAL INTERFERENCE was indispensably necessary for realizing the vizier's just demands." But by an article of the treaty of Chunar, in the following year, it was stipulated that the English resident be recalled. And in excuse of his conduct, Mr. Hastings declared to the board of council, "that if the nabob of Ferruckabad, Muzuffer Jung, *must* endure oppression, and he DARE NOT at this time propose his total relief, it concerns the reputation of our government to remove *our* participation in it." As to these oppressions, however, he on another occasion unaccountably asserted, that "whether they were well or ill founded, he never had an *opportunity* to ascertain."

The sezawall being thus reinstated, the country was again subjected to the most shocking ravages, insomuch that Mr. Hastings himself, of his own authority, ordered the collector to be removed, and the territory of Ferruckabad to be left to the sole management of its natural prince. But of this *singular* act of goodness Mr. Hastings afterwards complained, "that the resident of the nabob Muzuffer Jung at Calcutta had the insolence to report that it was PURCHASED." He therefore formally

withdrew his protection, and the sezawall was a third time re-appointed to his former office. "This was attended," to adopt the words of the governor-general, "with an aggravated renewal of the severities formerly exercised;" and the prince himself, in a letter addressed to Mr. Hastings, says: "The miseries which have fallen upon my country, and the poverty and distress which have been heaped upon me by the re-appointment of the sezawall, are such that a relation of them would, I am convinced, excite the strongest feelings of compassion in your breast; but it is impossible to relate them. On the one side, my country ruined and uncultivated to a degree of desolation which exceeds all description: on the other, my domestic concerns and connexions involved in such a state of distress and horror, that even the relations, the children and wives of my father are starving in want of daily bread, and are on the point of flying voluntary exiles from the country, and from each other." This letter, written in February 1783, Mr. Hastings did not lay before the board till October following, being, as he then asserted, "withheld from causes not necessary to mention." BOOK XX. 1781.

He now, however, thought it once more incumbent upon him to propose the removal of the sezawall, and the re-appointment of a British resident at Ferruckabad. But the end and purpose of this appointment were completely frustrated by a subse-

BOOK XX. 1781.

quent letter, rendering him liable to dismission at the pleasure of the vizier. And the resident Willes, a man of acknowledged probity, declared, in his letter of the 24th of April 1785, "that the situation of the country was more distressful than when the nabob addressed himself for relief in 1783; and that he was sorry to say that his appointment at Ferruckabad was of no use.—Ferruckabad," says he, "once the seat of great opulence and trade, is now daily deserted by its inhabitants—its walls mouldering away, without police, without protection. The ruin that has overtaken this country is not to be wondered at, when it is considered that there has been no state, no stable government for many years, —no authority sufficiently predominant to establish any regulations for the benefit of the country, whilst each authority has been exerted, as opportunity offered, for temporary purposes."

SUCH was the state of things in the vizieriate of Oude and its dependencies, when Mr. Hastings resigned the government of India in the spring of the year 1785. "If," exclaimed on a very memorable occasion a justly celebrated parliamentary orator*, "a stranger had at this time gone into the kingdom of Oude, ignorant of what had happened since the death of Sujah ul Dowla, that man, who with a savage heart had still great lines of

* Vide Sheridan's Speech in Westminster Hall, June 1788.

character, and who, with all his ferocity in war, had with a cultivating hand preserved to his country the riches which it derived from benignant skies and a prolific soil—if this stranger, ignorant of all that had happened in the short interval, and observing the wide and general devastation, and all the horrors of the scene—vegetation burnt up and extinguished, villages depopulated and in ruin, temples unroofed and perishing, reservoirs broken down and dry—he would naturally inquire, What war has thus laid waste the fertile fields of this once beautiful and opulent country? What civil dissensions have happened, thus to tear asunder and separate the happy societies that once possessed those villages? What disputed succession? What religious rage has with unholy violence demolished those temples, and disturbed fervent but unobtruding piety in the exercise of its duties? What merciless enemy has thus spread the horrors of fire and sword? What severe visitation of Providence has thus dried up the fountains and taken every vestige of verdure from the earth? Or rather, What monsters have stalked over the country, tainting and poisoning with pestiferous breath what the voracious appetite could not devour?—To such questions what must be the answer? No wars have ravaged these lands and depopulated these villages—no civil discords have been felt—no disputed succession—no religious rage—no merciless enemy—

BOOK XX. 1781.

BOOK XX. 1781.

no affliction of Providence, which, while it scourged for the moment, cut off the sources of resuscitation —no voracious and poisoning monsters—NO; all this has been accomplished by the friendship, generosity, and kindness of the English nation—They have embraced us with their protecting arms, and, lo! THESE are the FRUITS of their ALLIANCE."

Previous, however, to the blissful æra of the final departure of Mr. Hastings from India, various other incidents of importance took place; to which, in order to complete the picture of his ever-memorable administration, it is now necessary to advert. It must be called to recollection, that, after the conquest of Rohilcund by the nabob vizier Sujah ul Dowla, assisted by the arms of Britain, Fyzoola Khan was confirmed in the government of Rampore and its dependencies by the treaty of Lall-Dang. Conformably to the provisions of this treaty, Fyzoola Khan was permitted to retain in his service 5000 troops, and not a single man more. Also, with whomsoever the vizier should make war, it was stipulated, that Fyzoola Khan should send 2 or 3000 men, according to his ability, to join the forces of the vizier; and that, if the vizier should march in person, Fyzoola Khan should himself accompany him with his troops. Fyzoola Khan is described by the resident Middleton, as "a man of sense, not possessed with the passion of ambition,

but applying himself peaceably to the improvement of his country, which increased greatly in riches and revenue." The population also of Rampore had in a few years nearly doubled, in consequence of its becoming an asylum for the oppressed peasants who fled from the adjoining territories of Oude. But peace and prosperity seemed, in the view of Mr. Hastings, to constitute the most unpardonable species of delinquency: and it has been remarked of him, that his favorite and habitual maxim of policy was, "*that where there is treasure there is treason.*"

In the years 1777 and 1778, being greatly alarmed at the resumption of a number of jaghires by the young vizier, and the general oppression prevailing in the government of Oude, Fyzoola Khan made repeated and earnest applications to the Company for a renewal of his treaty with the vizier, originally attested by colonel Champion, under the guarantee of the Company, as the only power in which he had confidence, and to which he could look up for protection. This was at length granted, with the concurrence of the vizier, to whom, as well as to the Company, presents were made on the occasion; "such as became the gratitude of one party to offer, and the dignity of the other to receive."

On the breaking out of the war between England and France, Fyzoola Khan voluntarily offered to maintain 2000 cavalry for the service of the

BOOK XX. 1781.

Company; for which Mr. Hastings, in the name of the Supreme Council, returned him the warmest thanks, and acknowledged his claim on the generosity no less than the justice of the British government. But, in the course of the following year, Mr. Hastings suggested to the vizier to make a requisition of 5000 cavalry from the rajah of Rampore; although, according to the most rigid construction of the treaty, he was bound to contribute this quota only when the vizier took the field in person. He represented therefore, in respectful terms, "his inability to comply with this demand—that the whole force allowed him was only 5000 men, of whom 3000 were infantry, the aid of whom was necessary for the concerns of his jaghire." On this Mr. Hastings passed a resolve in council, himself and Mr. Wheeler being the only remaining members, importing, "that the nabob Fyzoola Khan had evaded the performance of the treaty with the late vizier Sujah ul Dowla, to which the *Honorable Company* were guarantees, as to the troops which he is obliged to furnish on the condition by which he holds the jaghire granted to him." And in a letter to the vizier Mr. Hastings says, "Demand *immediate delivery* of 3000 cavalry;" and if he should evade or refuse compliance, he advises to make a formal protest against him for breach of treaty.

It being already ascertained that Fyzoola Khan

had but 2000 cavalry in his service, the court of directors, in their subsequent dispatch, hesitated not to declare, "that the said demand carried with it the appearance of a determination to create a pretext for depriving him of his jaghire entirely, or to leave him at the mercy of the vizier." This demand, however, being peremptorily made, Fyzoola Khan offered, in addition to his 2000 cavalry, a body of 1000 foot, with one year's pay in advance, and regular funds for their payment in future. But the agent, Johnson, deputed on this business, informed him that his orders were, not to receive any palliation, but a negative or affirmative. In consequence of this refusal of an impracticable demand, the vizier proposed to Mr. Hastings "to resume the grant, and to leave Fyzoola Khan to join his other faithless brethren who were sent across the Ganges."

BOOK XX. 1781.

By the third article of the treaty of Chunar, permission was accordingly given to the vizier, "when time shall suit, to resume the said grant," although, in the council minute justificatory of this act, the conduct of Fyzoola Khan is expressly said "not to amount to an absolute breach of treaty, but to be uncandid, evasive, and unfriendly." The time, however, not being as yet judged *suitable*, an intimation was given to the nabob, that, in lieu of his military services, and other claims of the vizier and Company, a commutation in money, consisting of a

BOOK XX. 1781.

tribute and fines, would be more acceptable; the former being fixed at 20, the latter at 30 lacks. The nabob, in reply, declared, through his vakeel at Lucknow, "that it clearly appears to be intended to deprive him of his country; as the high demand now made it would be impossible for him to comply with. To a chief thus deprived, the *Honorable Company* had been accustomed to grant some allowance. This he expected from the governor's bounty; but if he should be disappointed, he would set off upon a pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina, and renounce the cares of the world. He directs his vakeel to ascertain whether the English intended to deprive him of his country; for, if they do, he is ready to resign it upon receiving an order from the resident."

The real views of the governor in this instance extended, however, no further than the extortion of money; and his adamantine heart being also, perhaps, a little softened by the extreme humility of this declaration, an agreement was at length made to free the nabob from all obligations of military service, in consideration of the annual tribute of 15 lacks, which Mr. Hastings confessed "to be an ample equivalent for the precarious claims of the vizier." And being now in the humor to make extraordinary concessions, the governor further declared, "that the rumors which had been spread of the nabob's hostile designs against the vizier were

totally groundless; and if he had been *inclined*, he had not the *means* to make himself formidable. On the contrary, being in the decline of life, and possessing a very fertile and prosperous jaghire, it is more natural to suppose that Fyzoola Khan wishes to spend the remainder of his days in quietness, than that he is preparing to embark in active and offensive scenes, which must end in his own destruction." This is the more remarkable, as Mr. Hastings, in reply to some severe animadversions of the court of directors on his conduct respecting Fyzoola Khan, had held a language totally contrary. The directors having expressed their wishes to be considered "rather as the guardians of the honor and property of the native powers, than as the instruments of their oppression;" Mr. Hastings concluded his vindication of the whole of these tyrannical proceedings in the following insolent words: "SUCH are the measures which we shall ever wish to observe towards our allies or dependents on the frontiers." BOOK XX. 1781.

It must not be wholly omitted, though the vast field of investigation and discussion to which it leads can, in the *prospectus* of general history, be viewed only in remote and obscure vision, "that on the departure of Mr. Francis from India, early in 1781, Mr. Hastings, upon whom the entire powers of government devolved, immediately dissolved the provincial councils, and established a

BOOK XX. 1781.

COMMITTEE of REVENUE, with powers in the highest degree despotic. The general renewal of leases coming under the consideration of this board, they determined, "that as to the period of the leases, it appeared best to the committee to limit them to one year." In this respect the Committee of Revenue were less lenient than the preceding famous Committee of Circuit: and they acted in direct contradiction to the former opinion of Mr. Hastings, solemnly declared, "that the farmer, i. e. the government lessee, who holds his farm for one year only, having no interest in the next, takes what he can with the hand of rigor—he will be tempted to exceed the bounds of right, and to augment his income by irregular exactions, and by racking the tenants, for which pretences will not be wanting where the farms pass annually from one hand to another. On the contrary, from long leases the farmer acquires a permanent interest in his lands—he will, for his own sake, lay out money in assisting his tenants, in improving lands already cultivated, and in clearing and cultivating waste lands." All the evils so clearly foreseen and so little regarded by Mr. Hastings, added to those arising from the vilest and grossest corruption and peculation, took place under this system: the chief administrator and manager of which was one Govind Sing, a wretch loaded, as Mr. Hastings himself acknowledged, with reproaches; and of whom it stands

upon record, "that there was scarcely a family of rank in the three provinces whom he had not, some time or another, distressed and afflicted—scarce a zemindary that he had not dismembered and plundered." BOOK XX. 1781.

During the long administration of Mr. Hastings, various momentous incidents occurred in the subordinate governments or departments of government in India; but of these a cursory mention must suffice. Mahomed Ali Khan, nabob of Arcot, had, by means too obvious to need explanation, acquired an unbounded influence over the counsels of the government of Madras. This corrupt influence, manifested by the existence of an immense debt, evidently fictitious, but acknowledged by the nabob as due to the members of the English presidency, was used to purposes of the most dreadful oppression. The native princes were expelled; the merchants, bankers, and manufacturers disappeared; and sterility, indigence, and depopulation overspread the face of the Carnatic. The court of directors had indeed from time to time interposed their feeble authority to repress these enormities. They had even ventured to issue their express orders, "that the native chieftains, called Polygars, should not be *extirpated*;" and they intimate their fears "that their *rebellion* may with too much justice be attributed to the mal-administration of the nabob's collectors." They affirm "that the di-

BOOK XX. 1781.

stresses occasioned by the wars in which the country has been involved were certainly great, but those caused by the nabob's oppressions they believe to be greater than all, because his oppressions are without intermission, the others are temporary." Supported by the aid and authority of that presidency, under the express sanction of the governor and council of Bengal, the nabob, on frivolous pretences, declared war against the rajah of Tanjore, a neighbouring prince and ancient ally of the Company; and, seizing his dominions, annexed them to his own territory. The court of directors, highly indignant at this unjust and violent usurpation, determined upon the restoration of the rajah: and for this purpose lord Pigot, a nobleman who had formerly been employed in the Indian service, and whose character, both in a civil and military capacity, stood deservedly high, was appointed to the government, with positive orders to that effect. The proceedings of the governor and council of Madras are thus severely stigmatised in the instructions of the court of directors to lord Pigot, dated April 12, 1775: "As the solemn promise by our governor and council, at the request of the nabob of the Carnatic and the king (i. e. rajah) of Tanjore, to guaranty the treaty of 1762, has been fully approved by the court of directors, we cannot but consider the public faith of the Company as forfeited, and the honor of the British nation deeply

affected, by the measures taken for dethroning that unhappy prince, whose kingdom has been wrested from him by our servants, and put under the government of Mahomed Ali Khan, in direct violation of that treaty, and contrary to our repeated orders and instructions, which have uniformly and expressly prohibited them from attempting to enlarge our own or the nabob's dominions."—His lordship arrived at Madras the latter end of the year 1775; and, notwithstanding all the opposition and the temptation thrown in his way, he accomplished the grand object of his appointment, in the re-instatement of the rajah. Disputes running extremely high in the council in consequence of this measure, the governor, in the autumn of 1776, suspended two of the members from their functions, by a doubtful and dangerous assumption of authority. But ample revenge was soon after taken by the remaining mal-contents, in the arrest and imprisonment of his lordship, who survived this daring outrage but a very short time. BOOK XX. 1781.

In the session of parliament which began November 1778, admiral Pigot, brother to lord Pigot, brought this affair in all its circumstances before the house of commons; and after stating, in a series of resolutions, the principal facts relative to this catastrophe, he concluded with moving an address to his majesty, "humbly praying that George Stratton, esquire, and the other members of the

BOOK XX. 1781.

council of Madras, be prosecuted for ordering their governor and commander-in-chief to be arrested, and confined under a military force—they being returned to England, and now within the jurisdiction of his majesty's courts of Westminster Hall."

Notwithstanding the labored justification of Mr. Stratton, who was a member of the house, these resolutions were unanimously carried. These gentlemen, being in the sequel tried and convicted in the court of King's Bench, lord Mansfield sitting as lord chief justice, were, to the amazement of the public, sentenced only to pay a trifling fine—and the laws which they had set at defiance in India seemed to be put in execution against them only to excite their contempt in England.

In the last session of 1780-1, the affairs of India again attracted the attention of parliament, in consequence of a petition presented to the house of commons from the governor and council at Calcutta, a second from the British settlers, and a third from the native inhabitants of Bengal, against the Supreme Court of Judicature established by the Regulating Act of 1773. The two former were drawn up in a very masterly style, and demonstrated, in a striking manner, the temerity and folly of those who could attempt to ingraft the laws and juridical maxims of England upon the ancient usages and immemorial institutions of Hindostan. The petition of the natives is remarkable for its pathos and simplicity.

"When," say the petitioners, "the ordinances of this court of judicature were issued, as they were all contrary to the customs, modes, usages, and institutions of this country, they occasioned terror in us; and day by day, as the powers of this court became more established, our ruin, uneasiness, dishonor, and discredit, have accumulated. We are now driven to the last extremity. Several who possessed means and ability have banished themselves from the country; but we do not all of us possess the means of flight, nor have we power to abide the oppression of this court. If, which GOD forbid! this our petition should not be accepted, giving ourselves up with resignation to our fate, we will sit down in expectation of death. After this, LET the soil of the country remain, and the court of justice—LET the court of justice remain upon the earth, or the earth cover it!" BOOK XX. 1781.

On a motion by general Smith, for referring these petitions to a committee, Mr. Boughton Rous took occasion to contrast the established policy of ancient Rome with that adopted by England: "In all subjection of territory contiguous to her own," said this able speaker, "Rome gave her own laws, if the people wished to receive them; or she allured them by immunities and honorable distinctions. Thus she assimilated all the petty states of Italy to her laws and manners, till the whole peninsula became one nation. But in her distant conquests

BOOK XXI 1781.

she pursued a very different policy. In these she was satisfied to hold the supreme govenment, to possess the revenues and military powers, leaving the inhabitants to conduct their internal police by their own native magistrates and laws; avoiding any insult to the religion or prejudices of the vanquished. Much better would it be for Britain to imitate, in this respect, the conduct of the ancient Romans, than to persist in rash and injudicious attempts to impose the laws of England upon the natives of India."

Many of the judicial decisions of the Supreme Court, as stated to the house, also wore the aspect of the most flagrant violence and injustice*; and

* Of these perhaps the most remarkable was the decision given by the chief justice in the famous PATNA CAUSE. It had been the practice of the provincial courts established under the English government, to refer questions of Mahomedan law to the cawzee and muftees—ancient and known judicial officers under the former government. A cause of great importance respecting a disputed property, referred, in the accustomed manner, by the council of Patna to the cawzee Sadhi and two muftees his assessors, being decided by them in a mode which approved itself to the public judgment as highly equitable and satisfactory, an *action of trespass* was nevertheless brought in the Supreme Court against the cawzee and muftees by the losing party. The action being admitted to lie, the cawzee was arrested by warrant of the chief-justice, to the consternation and astonishment of the inhabitants, in the public streets of Patna, when returning to his habitation from the exercise of the duties of his office. The sheriff having the

a general conviction seemed to be momentarily excited, of the radical absurdity and erroneousness of the present system. Nevertheless, the weight of

execution of the writ was directed not to admit the cawzee or his assessors to bail under the enormous sum of 400,000 rupees: and had it not been for the interposition of the Provincial Council, the defendants must have been dragged to Calcutta, at the distance of 500 miles, and have languished in prison till their doom was determined. "The seizure of the cawzee in this disgraceful manner," say the Provincial Council of Patna, in their letter to the Supreme Council of Calcutta, "coming from the execution of his office, has struck a general terror into the inhabitants of this city; we thought it therefore expedient, for the honor of government and the preservation of its authority, to offer the bail required for the enlargement of one of its first officers.—How can we expect," say they, "the officers of these courts to carry any orders of consequence into execution, till they are assured of safety and protection in the discharge of their duty?"

The circumstances of cruelty and atrocity attending this business are fully detailed in the second article of impeachment exhibited against sir Elijah Impey, in the house of commons, December 12, 1787, by sir Gilbert Elliot. In the sequel, the decision of the cawzee was, upon grounds the most scandalously frivolous and futile, reversed by the Supreme Court; and the cawzee and muftees condemned to pay damages and costs to the amount of 300,000 rupees; which was in effect a sentence of perpetual imprisonment. The cawzee Sadhi, being aged and infirm, in a short time sunk under the weight of this persecution; the other defendants remaining in prison upwards of two years, till they were set at liberty by express orders from England, commanding not only their release, but

BOOK XX. 1781.

regal influence, ever jealous and abhorrent of reform in every shape,—the natural partiality of the minister to his own original plans,—and the

the restoration of the muftees to the offices they had before occupied with fair and unsullied characters.

As a specimen of the evidence on which the chief-justice's sentence of reversal was founded, a small part of the examination of one Cojah Zekereah may be cited; sir Elijah Impey declaring from the bench the testimony of this man to be consistent and unimpeached. It was adduced to prove and establish the authenticity of various signatures professing to witness a certain devise or deed of conveyance, styled, in the technical language of the Mahomedan courts, the *hebenamah*, on the validity of which the merits of the whole cause absolutely depended.

Q. Who wrote the writing which is round the seals?

A. What is wrote about my own seal and that of Ghyrut Beg in the hebenamah, I remember writing myself; but the other three I do not remember writing. I am sure that above the seal of Mazum Beg is not mine—that around Ullah is not my writing.

Q. You must know your hand-writing—answer, Is it your hand-writing, YES or NO?

A. It is not.—It is not in my *memory* that it is. I do not *remember* it, if it is my hand-writing.—IT MAY BE SO.

Q. You must know your hand-writing—you need not look at it so frequently.

A. If it *is*, it may be I do not *recollect it*. If it may be, it may be I do not *recollect it*. IT IS CERTAINLY MY HAND-WRITING.

Q. Now you have sworn it is your hand-writing, and that it is not—which is true? One or the other of them must be true.

A. IT IS MY HAND-WRITING.

pressure of affairs still more urgent, prevented the adoption of any great or decisive measures of relief. From the contracted genius and policy

BOOK XX. 1781.

Q. You did not see Mahomed Iwaz write Ullah; therefore, why did you write *under it?*

A. I remember that when Ghyrut Beg affixed his seal, as he could not write, the deceased, Shawbaz Beg Khan, desired me to write over it; and having procured Iwaz to write in my absence Ullah, he desired me to write Ullah.

Q. You have said, I think, that you never saw the hebenamah after your own seal was put to it, and till after the death of Shawbaz Beg Khan; and that when you did put your seal to it, the other seals were not put to it, nor the signature Ullah: How came you now then to say, that after the seal of Ghyrut Beg was put to it, and the signature Ullah, that Shawbaz Beg Khan desired you to write upon the hebenamah?

A. It is true, that when he desired me to put my seal to it, there was no other seal than his. But about the same time, or a day after, when the other witnesses witnessed it, I was by, and he desired me to witness it. I was *always* present with Shawbaz Beg Khan.

Q. Were you by when Mahomed Iwaz wrote the word Ullah?

A. I was not present then. When Imayet Ullah Beg and Ghyrut Beg put their seals to it, I was present.

Q. Why—if you did write under the word Ullah, as you now say you did—why did you not immediately say that you did write under it?

A. I was in doubt about my own hand-writing; and, having sworn, I was cautious in acknowledging it.

Q. What did you mean by saying that you never saw the paper after you had put your seal to it till after the death of

BOOK XX. 1781.

of the existing administration, nothing great, decisive, or comprehensively beneficial, could indeed be expected. A bill was, however, introduced and passed, explanatory of the powers of the Supreme Court of Judicature, and in some points limiting and restraining its jurisdiction, which had been extended, by the arbitrary encroachments of the chief-justice, far beyond the real and obvious intent of the Regulating Act *.

Shawbaz Beg Khan, if Shawbaz Beg Khan did in fact produce it to you to write upon it at any time after you had put your seal to it?

A. It is not a contradiction. After all the seals were put to it, after that time, I meant to say, I never saw it till after the death of Shawbaz Beg Khan.

Q. Is all the writing over the seals of your hand-writing?

A. The LAST is not my hand-writing.

Q. Look to it, and be sure.

A. This *is* also my hand-writing.

Q. Why did you say it was not your hand-writing when it is?

A. I did not *remember* writing it: but on seeing it is the same flow of the pen, I acknowledge it to be my hand-writing.

* It may perhaps be permitted here transiently to note, as a pleasing instance of national generosity, however historically unimportant, a bill brought into the house of peers in the course of the session, after having passed the commons, "for allowing a certain sum to the two universities, as an indemnification for the exclusive right of printing almanacks, granted to them by patent of king James I., but of which they had been recently divested by a decision of the courts at Westminster."

BOOK XX. 1781.

At this period the war in India had become very general; a most formidable combination of the country powers in opposition to the English had taken place, which, assisted by the fleets and armies of France, seemed to menace the very existence of the empire of Britain in India. Hyder Ally, the ancient and inveterate enemy of the Company, in the month of July 1780, broke into the Carnatic with a vast army, and committed the most dreadful ravages. This sanguinary despot and conqueror, to adopt the high-wrought description of a cele-

Ravages of Hyder Ally in the Carnatic.

This was violently opposed by the lord-chancellor Thurlow, as a fruitless and scandalous waste of the public money. It being alleged, and evidence adduced to prove, that the profits of the patent had been applied by these learned bodies to the printing of scarce and valuable MSS, particularly many in the Arabic and other Oriental languages, which would otherwise never have been communicated to the world, the chancellor avowed, in terms which would have astonished a Talbot or a Hardwicke, his utter contempt of *Persian* and *Coptic literature*. He said, that, when *he* was at the university, he never spent his time in the study of such curious trifles: and they must be much more profound than he affected to be, who could either be pleased with or comprehend them." Happily the house of peers held the claims of literature in somewhat higher respect than the great law lord who presided in that illustrious assembly, and the bill passed with general and decided approbation.—

"O let not those of whom the muse is scorn'd,
"Alive or dead, be ever of the muse adorn'd!"

SPENSER.

BOOK XX. 1781.

brated orator, "finding that he had to do with men whom no treaty could bind, resolved, in the gloomy recesses of a mind capacious of such things, to leave the whole Carnatic an everlasting monument of vengeance, and to put perpetual desolation as a barrier between him and those against whom the faith which holds the moral elements of the world together was no protection. Having terminated his disputes with every enemy and every rival, burying their mutual animosities in their common detestation, and compounding all the materials of fury, havoc, and desolation into one black cloud, he hung for a while on the declivities of the mountains. Whilst the authors of all these evils were idly and stupidly gazing on this menacing meteor which blackened all their horizon, it suddenly burst, and poured down the whole of its contents upon the plains of the Carnatic. Then ensued a scene of woe which no eye had seen, no heart conceived, and which no tongue can adequately tell. All the horrors of war before known or heard of were mercy to that new havoc. A storm of universal fire blasted every field, consumed every house, destroyed every temple. The miserable inhabitants, flying from their flaming villages, in part were slaughtered. Others, without regard to sex, to age, to the respect of rank, or sacredness of function, enveloped in a whirlwind of cavalry, were swept into captivity in an unknown and hostile land.

One dead uniform silence reigned over the whole region. This hurricane of war passed through every part of the central provinces of the Carnatic *."

On the 10th of September (1780) Hyder Ally attacked and surrounded a considerable detached corps under colonel Baillie, which, after very great but unavailing efforts of valor, were entirely cut to pieces or made prisoners. He then assailed with his victorious army, and rendered himself master of Arcot; and scarcely did the government at Madras believe itself to be in safety, when sir Eyre Coote arrived to take the command of the Company's forces on the coast of Coromandel, and Hyder was in repeated engagements foiled and defeated by this fortunate and gallant veteran.

Various naval encounters also took place between the French and English fleets, commanded by M. Suffrein and admiral sir Edward Hughes, with equal skill, courage, and success. The naval force of both nations was gradually increased, in the progress of the war, to a degree far beyond what had been known at any former period in India, amounting at the last, on the part of the British, to eighteen ships of the line of battle. But the proportion continuing nearly the same, the mutual accessions of strength served only to increase the number of human victims: and the successive battles being ob-

Naval encounters in the East-Indies.

* Mr. Burke's speech on the affairs of Arcot.

BOOK XX. 1782.

the report of the select committee be referred to a committee of the house, took notice that sir Elijah Impey, his majesty's chief-justice in India, had so far degraded his character and office as to accept of a place under the Company, contrary to the solemn engagements under which he held his appointment *. An address was in consequence presented to the king, to beseech his majesty to recall sir Elijah Impey from India to answer for his conduct. A bill was likewise brought in by the lord-advocate, Mr. Dundas, for inflicting certain pains and penalties on sir Thomas Rumbold, for high crimes and misdemeanors. This bill, which at first excited very great expectation and attention, and which was continued from session to session in a manner wholly unprecedented, was at last suffered to sink in neglect and oblivion.

Sir Elijah Impey recalled from India.

Ineffectual resolution of the house of commons for the recall of Mr. Hastings.

On the 28th of May, 1782, the house of commons passed a series of resolutions, in the most decisive terms condemnatory of the whole system of Indian politics. The last resolution imported, "That Warren Hastings, esq. governor-general in Bengal,

* The place thus accepted by sir Elijah Impey was that of judge of a Court of Appeal, established at Calcutta under the appellation of the Court of Sudder Dewannee Adawlet, whose jurisdiction extended over the inferior provincial courts of Mofussell Dewannee Adawlet. To this office, held at the pleasure of the governor and council, with a salary of 8000*l.* per annum, sir Elijah Impey was advanced a few months previous to his memorable expedition to Benares and Oude.

and William Hornby, esq. president of the council at Bombay, having in sundry instances acted in a manner repugnant to the honor and policy of this nation, and thereby brought great calamities on India, and enormous expences on the East-India Company, it is the duty of the directors of the said Company to pursue all legal and effectual means for the removal of the said governor-general and president from their said offices, and to recall them to Great-Britain." But this resolution, though confirmed by the court of directors, the proprietary refused to ratify; and the house of commons, with the characteristic indecision and inconstancy of a popular assembly, took no subsequent measures to enforce it *.

BOOK XX. 1782.

* "About the prosperity of that great empire in the government of which every proprietor of India stock to a certain amount is intrusted with a share," says the celebrated author of The Wealth of Nations (vol. iii. book 5.), "he seldom cares at all. No other sovereigns ever were, or from the nature of things ever could be, so perfectly indifferent about the happiness or misery of their subjects, the improvement or waste of their dominions, the glory or disgrace of their administration, as from irresistible moral causes the greater part of such a mercantile company are and necessarily must be.—— By a strange absurdity (vol. ii. book 4.) they regard the character of the sovereign but as an appendix to that of the merchant; as something which ought to be made subservient to it; or by means of which they may be enabled to buy cheaper in India, and thereby to sell with a better profit in Europe. But if the genius of such a government, even as to what con-

BOOK XX. 1782.

The war in India was still carried on with various success. The valuable settlements of Negapatnam on the Coromandel coast, and Trinquemalé in the island of Ceylon, belonging to the Dutch, were captured by the English. On the other hand, colonel Braithwaite, with a detachment of the Com-

cerns its direction in Europe, is in this manner essentially faulty, that of its administration in India is still more so. A council of merchants can command obedience only by military force, and their government is therefore necessarily military and despotical. Their proper business, however, is that of merchants. It is to sell upon their master's account the European goods consigned to them, and to buy in return Indian goods for the European market. It is to sell the one as dear and buy the other as cheap as possible; and consequently to exclude as much as possible all rivality. The genius of the administration is therefore so far the same as that of the direction. It tends to make government subservient to the interests of monopoly. All the members of administration, besides, trade more or less upon their own account; and it is in vain to prohibit them from doing so. If by an order from Europe they cannot act openly and directly, they will employ the whole authority of government, and pervert the administration of justice, in order to harass and ruin those who interfere with them in any branch of commerce which, by means of agents either concealed or at least not publicly avowed, they may choose to carry on. It is a very singular government, in which every member of the administration wishes to get out of the country, and consequently to have done with the government, as soon as he can; and to whose interest the day after he has left it, and carried his whole fortune with him, it is perfectly indifferent though the whole country were swallowed up by an earthquake."

pany's troops, was totally routed on the banks of the Coleroon by Tippoo Saib, son of Hyder Ally, assisted by a body of French troops; after which Cuddalore surrendered to the victors. BOOK XX. 1782.

The operations of the war on the Malabar coast were conducted by general Goddard with a great display of military skill and spirit. Invading the province of Guzzerat, in the year 1780, he reduced the city of Amedabad, its capital; and on the 2d of April he stormed the camp of the Mahrattas, commanded by Madajee Scindia, whom he totally defeated. Entering into a treaty with the rana of Gohud, major Popham, by order of the general, attacked and carried, in the course of the summer, the strong fortress of Gualior, which was garrisoned by the Mahrattas, though within the territory of the rana. Military operations in India.

Early in 1781, general Goddard sat down before Basseen; and after reducing this important place he desisted from farther active operations, in consequence of the succours he was under a necessity to send to sir Eyre Coote. In the province of Malva, colonel Carnac surprised, April 30, the camp of the enemy, and Madajee Scindia was a second time totally routed. After this the Mahratta chieftain made secret overtures for a separate peace; and a cessation of hostilities between England and the Mahratta states took place in the month of October 1781. The definitive articles of peace Exertions of general Goddard.

BOOK XX. 1782

were signed in May following at Salberg, by Mr. Anderson on the part of the Company, and by Scindia, general and plenipotentiary, on the part of the peishwa. By this treaty Basseen and the other recent acquisitions in the Guzzerat were restored to the Mahrattas, the island of Salsette only of the late conquests remaining to the English; for, at the *request* of Madajee Scindia, the English consented also to relinquish their claim to the city of Baroach and the contiguous districts. Ragonaut Row was for ever abandoned, and compelled to quit the territories of the Company; and their ally, the rana of Gohud, who appears indeed without scruple to have opposed duplicity to duplicity, was, under the pretext of "leaving him to settle his own affairs," virtually delivered up to the mercy of his enemies.—But the most extraordinary article of the treaty was that whereby the peishwa engages that Hyder Ally Khan shall be made to relinquish, within six months, all such territories belonging to the Company or their allies as he shall have taken possession of since the 9th of the month Ramzan. The fact was, that not only a treaty of peace, but of the strictest alliance and friendship, was now formed by the governor-general Hastings with the Mahratta court; and a secret project was believed to be already in contemplation for the partition of Hyder's dominions. And thus, notwithstanding the ill success of his former schemes of conquest,

no sooner was this "daring pilot" of the state, who "sought the storms" and invoked the tempests, obliged to relinquish one vast and hazardous plan of aggrandizement, than he entered with equal eagerness into another. The nizam of the Decan and the rajah of Berar were also parties in this accommodation, for their accession to which they received large pecuniary gratifications. BOOK XX. 1782.

This pacification with the Mahrattas induced the presidency of Bengal to risk a bold attempt on the dominions of Hyder Ally on the Malabar side. The kingdoms of Canara and Mysore, both under subjection to that prince, stretch along the western coast of Hindostan, nearly in the latitude of Arcot. The chief city of the former is Bednore, a name changed by its present possessor to Hydernagore. A considerable force, already landed in the kingdom of Mysore, had relieved the city of Tellicherri, a post or factory on that coast belonging to the English, and reduced the neighbouring town of Calicut. It was with difficulty, nevertheless, that the English kept their footing in this country, when general Matthews arrived from Bombay with very large reinforcements, and immediately laid siege to the important fortress of Onore, which was carried by storm on the 5th of January 1783. The carnage on this occasion is said to have been terrible; and the indiscriminate seizure of treasure, public and private, there deposited, exhibited, in the most

BOOK XX. 1782.

odious light, the rapacity and avarice of the commander.

Death of Hyder Ally

At this period the hopes of the English were raised to the highest pitch by the death of Hyder Ally, a name ever memorable in the annals of India. He was succeeded by his son Tippoo Saib, who had already given proofs of valor and ability not unworthy his descent.

From Onore general Matthews proceeded through *the Ghauts*, or the passes of the mountains, to Hydernagore, which surrendered to him without resistance. Here, as at Onore, the general was accused of combining the meanness of fraud with the ferocity of violence; and colonel Macleod, second in command, and several other officers, retired in disgust from the army. After this, Annampore by storm, Carwa and Mangalore by capitulation, were successively subdued.

Disasters in Mysore.

In the mean time Tippoo prepared for the relief of Mysore and Canara; and, leaving a strong force to guard his conquests in the Carnatic, he marched his army across the peninsula with unexpected and unexampled expedition, and arrived in the vicinity of Hydernagore in the month of April 1783. By a series of excellent military manœuvres he made himself master of the Ghauts in the rear of general Matthews, by which means all communication with the sea was entirely cut off. The force of general Matthews being now centred in Hydernagore, this

city was invested by Tippoo with a vast army, computed at 150,000 men, covering the hills on every side as far as the eye could reach. The English, reduced to extremity, were soon obliged to surrender on capitulation, by the terms of which the public treasure was restored to the sultan; but not a rupee being found in the fortress, general Matthews was charged by the conqueror with gross collusion, and a direct infraction of the treaty; and being conducted in chains to Seringapatam, the capital of Mysore, he was thrown into a dungeon, and, with the greater part of his officers, perished miserably in confinement under various devices of torture.

Notwithstanding the departure of Tippoo from the Carnatic, the presidency of Madras had still to cope with superior force. Although the utmost exertions of sir Eyre Coote had not been wanting, no decisive advantage had been gained in the last campaign with Hyder; and the ill state of health of this able commander obliged him to resign the army into the hands of general Stuart, and to retire at the conclusion of the year 1783 to Bengal. Early in the ensuing spring, believing himself somewhat recovered, he returned to Madras in order to resume his command; but two days only after his arrival he expired, in an advanced age, having acquired, in more than thirty years' military service in India, a reputation, the lustre of which could be

BOOK XX. 1782.

deemed scarcely inferior to that of his predecessor lord Clive. The important settlement of Trinquemalé was retaken by M. Suffrein in the course of the last summer, and a very large reinforcement of French troops landed in the Carnatic under M. de Bussi. Notwithstanding all opposition, general Stuart invested Cuddalore, and made considerable progress in the siege, when an express arrived with the intelligence of a treaty of peace having been concluded between the belligerent powers, on which an immediate cessation of hostilities took place.

After the conquest of Hydernagore, and the recapture of the inland country by Tippoo, he laid siege to Mangalore, the principal place yet remaining in the hands of the English. An obstinate resistance was made by the garrison; but a practicable breach being at length effected, a general assault was in contemplation, when news arrived of the pacification which had taken place in Europe; and the French troops and engineers in his service informed him, that they must immediately withdraw their assistance. Tippoo, after much passionate expostulation, therefore assented to an armistice, in a few days after which event colonel Macleod arrived with powerful reinforcements from Bombay. A negotiation was immediately commenced for a definitive peace. This was accelerated by a declaration which the sultan received from the peishwa of the

Mahrattas, that if Tippoo did not consent to an immediate evacuation of the Carnatic, he would unite with the English against him. BOOK XX. 1783.

During the continuance of the truce and the negotiation, the *Bibby*, or princess of Cannanore, a district depending on the kingdom of Canara, having seized some boats with sepoys belonging to the garrison of Mangalore, accidentally forced by stress of weather on her coast, colonel Macleod attacked and stormed the fortress of Cannanore, making the princess herself prisoner. Although loud complaints were made by Tippoo of this violation of the armistice, it does not appear much to have retarded the negotiation, the articles of peace being signed at Mangalore, March 11th, 1784, on the terms of mutual restitution, and a renunciation on the part of the sultan of his claim to the sovereignty of the Carnatic. This claim, there is every reason to believe, would never have been enforced, or perhaps advanced, if the rash and violent conduct of the English government respecting the Mahrattas had not encouraged and incited the attempt. To this purpose Mr. Whitehill, president of Madras, in his exculpatory minute of November 1780, says, " The offensive line of conduct adopted against the Mahrattas threw them, i. e. the governor and council of Bengal, into a scene of action so extensive and so full of difficulty, that neither their forces nor their revenues were capable of

BOOK XX. 1782.

bearing them through with any possibility of success. Had the experience of former times been called into their aid, they would have seen that Aurengzebe, one of the most formidable monarchs that ever sat upon the throne of Dehli, was, after a twenty years' struggle with all the power and riches of Hindostan, obliged to abandon a similar attempt. The truth is, the Mahratta war has been the real source of all the mischief that hath befallen the Carnatic. Had peace existed in that quarter with the English, Hyder Ally Khan would never have ventured from his own dominions.—He saw the extremity to which we were reduced, and seized the occasion to distress us where he knew we were most vulnerable."

But the conduct of Mr. Hastings, subsequent to the restoration of peace in India, is perhaps the most extraordinary, certainly the most mysterious part of his dark and inextricable policy. The peace concluded with the Mahrattas, it has been already remarked, was followed by an alliance of the most strict and confidential kind. And from that period it seemed to be the great and favorite object of the English governor-general to confirm and aggrandize the power of that state, which he had ever before affected to consider as most formidable and adverse to the English interests, and whom he had even styled "the NATURAL ENEMIES of the Company."

In the month of March 1783, Mr. Hastings dispatched, by no authentic act, but as his own secret agent, major Browne to the court of Dehli, in order to make proposals to the emperor, Sha Allum, to enter into engagements with the Company and the Mahratta government, for the accomplishment of certain designs in favor of the emperor, but of a very hostile nature to several powers of the Continent then in amity with the Company. And major Browne was commissioned to offer to the Mogul, to provide for the entire expence of any troops the emperor might require; which proposal was accepted with every symptom of eagerness and satisfaction. And the negotiation being sufficiently advanced, Mr. Hastings openly brought forward a proposition in council, October 5, 1783, to assist the Mogul with a military force: and at a subsequent meeting of the Board, he laid before them a letter from major Browne, dated Dehli, December 30, 1783, containing, amidst much miscellaneous matter, the following extraordinary passages:—"The business of assisting the SHAH can and must now go on, if we wish to be secure in India, and regarded as a nation. We have offered, the shah has accepted the offer of assistance. We have annexed conditions, the shah has approved of them."

The project thus unexpectedly and forcibly obtruded on the Board by Mr. Hastings was, however,

BOOK XX. 1784.

very ill received by his colleagues, Mr. Wheeler and Mr. Stables, who strongly remonstrated against involving the Company in new wars and dangerous foreign connections. But Mr. Hastings was not a man to be discouraged by trivial obstacles.

Early in the following year, 1784, Mr. Hastings made a progress to the city of Lucknow, and there had an interview with the prince Mirza Jehander Shah, eldest son of the Mogul, and who, as the governor-general in his public letter says, "had long held the principal part in the administration of the king his father." From Mr. Hastings's account of this interview, which he represents as wholly unexpected and fortuitous, the prince having left the court of Dehli without even the knowledge of the emperor, it appears that urgent solicitations were made by the heir of the Mogul empire to the English governor, for aid and assistance to raise the KING his father from that state of degradation and insignificance into which he had fallen: intimating his readiness even to go in person to England to represent the distresses of the emperor of Hindostan, in the hope of obtaining relief. Mr. Hastings in reply, informed the prince, "that the English nation, just emerged from a state of universal warfare, required repose, and would be alarmed at any movement of which it could not immediately see the issue or the progress, but which might eventually create

new hostilities; that, as to himself, he could not engage, *if he chose it*, in a business of this nature, without the concurrence of his colleagues in office, who, he believed, would be averse to it; that he would, however, represent his situation to the joint members of his own government, and wait their determination. In the mean time he advised him to make advances to Madajee Scindia, as the effective head of the Mahratta state, and who was in intimate union and sworn connexion with the English."

In his subsequent dispatches to the council at Calcutta, Mr. Hastings requests to be invested with discretionary powers of acting in relation to the court of Dehli, under a vague promise of "not *proceeding* against their sense." The council, in reply, not only refused to grant any such powers, but exhorted him "most sedulously and cautiously to avoid, in his correspondence with the different potentates of India, whatever might commit, or be strained into an *interpretation* of committing, the Company as to their army or treasure—observing, that the Company's orders are positive against their interference in the objects of dispute between the *Country Powers*." But this injunction the sophistical subtlety of Mr. Hastings was at no loss how to evade; for in his letter, of June 1784, to the court of directors, he says, "The faction which now surrounds the THRONE is widely different from the idea which your commands are intended to convey

BOOK XX. 1782.

by the expressions to which you have generally applied them, of 'Country Powers,' to which that of permanency is a necessary adjunct, and which may be more properly compared to a splendid bubble, which the slightest breath of opposition may dissipate, with every trace of its existence—That if the Mogul's authority is suffered to receive its final extinction, it is impossible to foresee what power may arise out of its ruins, or what events may be linked in the same chain of revolution with it.—Your interests *may* suffer by it; your reputation certainly *will*, as his right to our assistance has been constantly acknowledged; more especially as, by the movements which the influence of our government by too near an approach has excited, it has unfortunately become the efficient instrument of a great portion of the king's present distresses and dangers."

According to this most curious logic, the Company's orders, not to interpose in the disputes of "the country powers," were not violated by entering into a war for the re-establishment of the authority of the Mogul; *because*, the imperial crown of Hindostan being reduced to a "splendid bubble," the emperor could not now be reckoned amongst the country powers. But, either recollecting or forgetting himself, he immediately offers another argument directly the reverse of the former, viz. "that the authority of the Mogul, even in its present state,

was so considerable, that, if it was suffered to be annihilated, great danger might arise to the Company's interests from the power which should be established on its ruins." And lastly he urges, "that the English Company are bound in equity and justice to assist in raising the throne of the Mogul to its former state of exaltation, because they have been the efficient instrument of its present distress and degradation" (alluding no doubt to the deprivation of his tribute and the seizure of his demesne), in lieu of which they were now bound *in honor* to enable him to seize upon the property of others; and his imperial majesty would, no doubt, deem himself bound in return to reward his honorable allies, the Company, with a reasonable share of the plunder.

On the first advice of the flight of the prince from Dehli, Mr. Hastings wrote to the Mahratta chief, Madajee Scindia, to apprise him of this event, and, professing *himself unprepared*, to ask his advice how to act in this emergency: and certain confidential agents from the Mahratta chief repairing to Lucknow, held frequent and secret conferences with the governor, the purport of which was never communicated to the Board at Calcutta.

The whole of this tissue of cabals and intrigues terminated, however, very unexpectedly, in the sudden invasion of the emperor's territories by the Mah-

BOOK XX. 1782.

rattas, who made themselves masters of Dehli; and the emperor, being a second time prisoner in their hands, was obliged to declare the head of the Mahratta state to be vicegerent of the Mogul empire; in which capacity great and indefinite claims of superiority were advanced on the part of the peishwa, and a specific claim set up to the tribute due to the emperor from Bengal.

Far from being alarmed at this addition to the Mahratta power, Mr. Hastings declared, "that such was the attachment of Scindia to the English, that, while he lives, every accession of territory obtained by him will be an advantage to this government." Upon which it has been authoritatively remarked, "That if this were true respecting the personal disposition of Scindia, yet does it not lessen the criminality of establishing a power which must survive the man to whom a power more than personal was given*."

What is perhaps the most extraordinary circumstance in these extraordinary transactions, Mr. Has-

* Vide Articles of Impeachment exhibited against Warren Hastings, Esq. by Edmund Burke. But these articles must not be confounded with the articles actually presented by the commons, at the bar of the house of lords, which, being reduced by a subsequent revision, from 22 to 20 in number, assumed a new and very different form. In the latter, the important charges relative to the Rohillas, the Mahrattas, the treatment of the

tings, embracing the opportunity when the Mahrattas were assembled in great force upon the frontiers of the vizieriate of Oude, entered into an AGREEMENT with the vizier, after seven years useless retention of them at a ruinous expence, to withdraw a very great proportion of the British troops, in this moment of danger, from the province; asserting, in contradiction to the whole tenor of his conduct and former declarations, "that this government has not any right to force defence with its maintenance upon the nabob." The council refusing in present circumstances to ratify this *agreement*, Mr. Hastings moved, in his minute of December 4, 1784, "that if, contrary to his opinion, the said troops should not be reduced, they should be employed under the prince Mirza Jehander Shah (now notoriously under the absolute control of the Mahrattas) to assist in carrying on a war against the nation called the SEIKS, the ancient enemies of the Mahratta state—a warlike people, possessing an extensive territory to the north-west of India, on the confines of Tartary. I feel," says he, "the sense of an

BOOK XX. 1782.

Mogul, the negotiations at Dehli, &c. &c. were entirely omitted. Those retained were: 1st, the article respecting Benares; 2d, the Begums; 3d, Ferruckabad; 4th, Contracts; 5th, Fyzoola Khan; 6th, Presents; 7th, Revenues; and the thirteen last consist in a detail, under various heads, of the oppressions and distractions prevailing in the province of Oude, in consequence of the mal-administration of Mr. Hastings.

BOOK XX. 1782.

obligation imposed upon me, by the supposition I have made, to state a mode of rendering the detachment of use in its prescribed station, and of affording the appearance of a cause for its detention."

Mr. Hastings indeed admitted, that there was no *present danger* to the Company's possessions from this remote and almost unknown people; but he declared, "that their military and enthusiastic spirit, the hardiness of their natural constitution, the dangers which *might* arise from them in some future time, if they *should ever happen* to be united under one head, were reasons in favor of this war; and he predicted great danger from them, at no very distant period, if they be permitted to grow into maturity without interruption. Acknowledging that the urgent solicitations of the prince had their weight with him, he professed nevertheless that a stronger impulse, arising from the hope of blasting the growth of a generation whose strength *might* become fatal to our own, pleaded in his mind for supporting his wishes."

The council, unable to explore the dark and unfathomable abyss of the governor's politics, and astonished, doubtless, at an inconsistency so gross and flagrant as that of warring against a power *lest it should become formidable*, in favor of a power *already formidable*, negatived the proposition; and the peace of India was for this time happily preserved.

The governor, perceiving his influence in the council lost, knowing his reputation at home to be greatly in the wane, and fearing most probably a disgraceful dismission, now thought it expedient to RESIGN the GOVERNMENT. On his arrival in England he was, after a long previous investigation of his numerous delinquencies, most deservedly IMPEACHED at the bar of the house of lords, by the commons of Great Britain, of HIGH CRIMES and MISDEMEANORS in the execution of his office. BOOK XX. 1782. Resignation of Mr. Hastings.

The political character of Mr. Hastings, on a cool and impartial review of his conduct, so forcibly impresses itself upon the mind, that it can derive little aid from any adventitious illustration. Daring in the conception, and ardent in the prosecution of his designs; fertile in resources, and relying with confidence and even with pride on the strength of his own genius, his character acquired a certain stamp of dignity and superiority from the inflexibility of his temper, and the apparent force of his own conviction respecting the rectitude and propriety of his measures: to which must be added, that in his public dispatches he possessed the dangerous art of giving plausibility to the most absurd and pernicious measures by artful and imposing glosses, branching out sometimes into studied ambiguities, sometimes into bold assumptions, under a perpetual external show of ingenuousness, liberality, and candor. His character.

BOOK XX. 1782.

The numerous individuals returning in rapid succession from India, whom Mr. Hastings had engaged in his interest by various obligations, contributed also to enhance his reputation, by the high eulogiums which they almost universally bestowed upon his conduct; and in which, dazzled by the brilliant exterior of the governor's administration, and unequal to the clear comprehension of an extensive and complex system, they were probably for the most part very sincere. The truth however is, that this man, for thirteen years the scourge of the East, and whom ignorance and folly have preposterously ranked with the SULLYS and the CHATHAMS of the West, has never been, and never can become, the theme of discerning and rational panegyric. Not to speak of his total and flagrant disregard of the sole legitimate end and object of government—the happiness of the governed—his conduct will be found, in almost all its parts, and in the choice and prosecution of his own purposes, absurd, perplexed, capricious, and inconsequent. His course was one perpetual deviation from the straight and luminous path of political and moral rectitude; and his general reputation was supported chiefly by his habitual vigor of mind and personal courage, which were in him intimately blended, and seemed to rise on some occasions even to the semblance of magnanimity. His exertions in the last war for the preservation of the Carnatic, which he had so wan-

tonly and rashly endangered, were generally and justly spoken of as highly meritorious; but even in this most splendid and boasted part of his political conduct he could challenge only the praise of a madman, who first fires the house and then labors strenuously to extinguish the flames. BOOK XX. 1782.

The administration of Mr. Hastings has been truly said, in the glowing expressions of eloquence*, "to exhibit a medley of meanness and outrage, of duplicity and depredation, of prodigality and oppression, of the most callous cruelty contrasted with the hollow affectation of liberality and good faith. The sordid system of commercial policy, to which all the arrangements and regulations of the Company are ultimately to be traced, was under his government carried to its utmost extent. Thus have nations been extirpated for a sum of money, whole tracts of country laid waste to furnish an investment, princes expelled for the balance of an account, and a bloody sceptre wielded in one hand, in order to replenish the empty purse of mercantile mendicancy displayed in the other."

The concessions of Mr. Hastings himself are indeed occasionally very large and ample; for his views seldom seem to have extended beyond the precise object which he wished at the moment to

* Vide Sheridan's Speech on the Begum Charge, in the 14th article of impeachment.

BOOK XX. 1782.

compass. The ruinous effects of British perfidy and British barbarity in India are very strongly and distinctly stated in his letters, dispatches, and minutes of council. In his minute of September 29, 1783, he says, "By a sacred and undeviating observance of every principle of public faith, the British dominion might have by this time acquired the means of its extension, through a virtual submission to its authority, to every region of Hindostan and Decan.—But the powers of India ALL dread the connexion. The subjection of Bengal, the usurpations in the Carnatic, the licentious violations of the treaty with the nizam, the effects of our connexions with the vizier, stand as TERRIBLE PRECEDENTS against us." Yet as to himself, the *primum mobile* of the whole system, he declares in his famous Minutes of Defence, "that he had the conscious satisfaction to see all his measures terminate in their designed objects; that his political conduct was invariably regulated by truth, justice, and good faith; and that he resigned his charge in a state of established peace and security, with all the sources of its abundance unimpaired, and even improved." To reconcile these apparent incongruities, we are required therefore, by a species of faith which can work miracles, to believe that there existed in India crimes without a criminal, oppressions without an oppressor, and tyranny without a tyrant. In fine,

when we consider with serious attention the origin and progress of the British government in India, the friendship and generosity with which the English nation was received and permitted to form establishments in that country, the black and base ingratitude with which those obligations were requited, and the unexampled, unprovoked, and unatoned excesses which have been perpetrated on the princes and inhabitants of Hindostan—is it the weakness of superstition merely to tremble at the secret apprehension that some mighty vengeance is yet in store for this kingdom; such as finally, by the intervention of obvious causes, overwhelmed and subverted the proud, corrupt, and tyrannic empires of antiquity?

We are now to revert, from this long but necessary and important digression, to the regular narrative of events in Europe.

In the course of the year 1780, an attempt was made to effect a general accommodation amongst the belligerent powers, under the powerful mediation of the Imperial Courts of Vienna and Petersburgh. It was suggested that a general suspension of arms should be a preliminary proposition; but this was rejected by the British ministry, who declared the readiness of England to meet in congress with France and Spain, but never to permit the interference of any foreign power between her

BOOK XX. 1782.

and her rebellious subjects. On the other hand, the Bourbon courts protested that they would never make a public sacrifice of their honor and good faith by abandoning the Americans.

At length, after the interchange of numerous papers, prince Kaunitz, who had been principally engaged in managing the conferences, declared all hopes of a favorable termination of them to be precluded. This sagacious statesman admitted the arguments of England to be fair and honorable, but too lofty for the force of the nation. When the determination not to permit the introduction of American affairs was disclosed, he sarcastically said, "Whoever succeeds in making a peace for you on these terms *erit mihi magnus Apollo.*" In the true spirit of friendship, though in language little courtly, he admonished the English ministers, that the difficulties and dangers they had to contend against seemed to require important concessions.—"If you have not strength enough to support your rights," said he, "you must yield to superior force and dire necessity." His advice producing, as usually happens where advice is most needed, no effect, the prince became reserved to the British ambassador, and scrupled not to express openly his disapprobation of the policy of the British cabinet.

An effort was in vain made by the court of London to conciliate the favor of the emperor, by offer-

ing *to open the navigation of the Scheld.* And it was strongly urged upon him, that a connexion with England could alone restore that political system which would give to Austria its due weight in Europe. The emperor, however, was probably of opinion, that neither reputation nor advantage was to be derived from connecting himself with a country governed by counsels, which rendered it the object of universal pity or derision; and after some time prince Kaunitz was ordered to inform the British court of the accession of his sovereign to the northern league, known by the appellation of the Armed Neutrality*.

Attempt on the isle of Jersey.

The military history of the present year was marked, in its commencement, by a spirited though abortive attempt on the part of the French to capture the island of Jersey by a *coup-de-main*.—Early on the 16th of January, 1781, a landing was effected by the baron de Rullecourt, at the head of about 800 men, at the Bank du Violet; and, to the astonishment of the inhabitants, when the day began to dawn, the market-place of St. Helier was found occupied by French troops. The governor's house being entirely surrounded, he was compelled to surrender himself prisoner, and was so far intimidated as even to sign articles of capitulation. But when Elizabeth-Castle was summoned, captain Aylward,

* Vide Adolphus's History of George III. Vol. iii. chap. 42.

BOOK XX. 1782.

the commander, far from paying the least regard to the acts of the governor in his present state of durance, fired upon the French and obliged them to retreat; and major Pierson, a young and gallant officer, second in command, having assembled the regular troops and militia of the island on the heights near the town, attacked the enemy with the greatest resolution and vigor. Baron Rullecourt being at the commencement of the action mortally wounded, the French troops in less than half an hour laid down their arms, and surrendered themselves prisoners of war. Unfortunately almost the last shot fired previous to the surrender proved fatal to major Pierson, in whose conduct, during the whole of this transaction, discretion and valor had been equally conspicuous.

Early intelligence of the rupture with Holland having been transmitted to the West Indies, admiral Rodney and general Vaughan appeared, February 1781, with a very considerable naval and military force, before the island of St. Eustatia, that famous deposit of wealth and mart of traffic. So little apprehensive were the inhabitants of this event, that it was with difficulty they were brought to give credit to the summons. Being totally destitute of the means of resistance, they were compelled to surrender at discretion. But so far were the British commanders from imitating the noble example of lenity and policy set by the marquis de Bou-

illé, that, with a rigor unknown and unheard-of amongst civilized nations, the immense property found on the island was declared to be confiscated, on pretence of the assistance afforded by the inhabitants to the Americans—as if the inhabitants of Eustatia were amenable to the laws of Great Britain. The stores and merchandize, estimated at three millions sterling, were publicly sold for about one-fourth of their real value; and the world saw with astonishment British naval and military officers, of the highest rank and reputation, degraded by a kind of harlequin metamorphosis into salesmen and auctioneers. A prodigious number of trading vessels lying in the harbor also became the property of the victors, with two men of war, one of which was a flag-ship commanded by admiral count Byland. BOOK XX. 1782.

Nearly at the same time the Dutch settlements of Demerary, Berbicia, and Issequibo, on the Southern Main, also submitted without resistance to the arms of his Britannic majesty. Here, however, the same indiscriminate confiscation of private property did not take place. But the proceedings at St. Eustatia excited universal consternation; and a memorial was presented to admiral Rodney and general Vaughan by the hands of Mr. Glanville, his majesty's solicitor-general for St. Christopher's, strongly representing, "that if by the fate of war

BOOK XX. 1782.

the British West-India Islands should fall into the hands of an enraged enemy, the conduct of St. Eustatia would be a pretext for them to retaliate; that the conquerors of all civilized countries had avoided the invasion of private property; that the generosity of the enemy had been very conspicuous; and even in the case of Grenada, which had been taken by storm, the rights of individuals had been held sacred; that Eustatia was a free port, and the rich and various commodities found there were far from being the sole property of the Dutch; that a great proportion of it belonged to British subjects; and that, previous to the declaration of war, the trade to Eustatia was strictly legal, and the officers of his majesty's customs cleared out vessels from all the ports of Great Britain and Ireland for this island. And not merely the legality, but the propriety of this trade was confirmed by the conduct of his majesty's naval officers in those seas; for if the king's enemies were supplied by the trade of his subjects through Eustatia, they were likewise supplied, through the same channel, by the sale of the prizes captured by his majesty's ships of war."—The admiral haughtily replied to Mr. Glanville, "that he had not as yet LEISURE to peruse the memorial; but that the island of Eustatia was Dutch, every thing in it was Dutch, every thing was under the protection of the Dutch flag, and as Dutch it should be treated."

While the British arms were thus ignobly employed, the French fleet under count de Grasse, after a partial engagement with admiral Hood, who, in the absence of sir George Rodney, commanded the English fleet, steered its course to the island of Tobago, on which M. de Bouillé, with a considerable land force, made an immediate descent. Admiral Rodney, on receiving intelligence of an attack, detached in no great haste a squadron for the relief of the island, which finding the French in great force was obliged to return; and the admiral, accompanied by general Vaughan, now sailed in person with the whole fleet for Tobago, off the coast of which he arrived the 4th of June, but had the mortification to learn that the island had surrendered on the second.

Eustatia retaken by the French.

At the latter end of the year the island of Eustatia was lost in a manner not less disgraceful than that by which it had been gained. M. de Bouillé, receiving certain intelligence of the habitual negligence of the garrison, landed by night about four hundred troops, part of a much larger force which the tempestuousness of the weather had separated, in a cove at the back of the island. This spirited officer, confiding in his fortune, advanced with his troops, as soon as day-light appeared, to the citadel, which they immediately stormed, and carried with little difficulty; and the surprise being very complete, near seven hundred men, with colonel Cock-

BOOK XX. 1782.

burne their commander, were, by a most humiliating necessity, constrained to surrender themselves prisoners of war. The generosity of M. de Bouillé was on this occasion, as on every other, no less conspicuous than his gallantry, forming a contrast with the conduct of the late captors, very flattering to the feelings of his countrymen. Restitution, so far as circumstances would permit, was immediately made to those unfortunate individuals who had been stripped and plundered of their property; and a declaration published, that the forces of his Most Christian majesty defended the island only till relieved by the troops of their High Mightinesses.

Naval and military operations in America.

On the continent of America, the war in the central colonies, though conducted by the opposing commanders in chief, seemed to languish, and affords scarcely any incident worthy of historic regard. Early in the present year it happened that the whole Pennsylvania line in the continental army, from causes of dissatisfaction not well ascertained, at once revolted; and, collecting the artillery, stores, &c., belonging to them, moved in an entire body out of the camp. General Clinton, anxious to improve to the utmost this seeming advantage, immediately passed over to Staten Island with a large body of forces, and dispatched messengers to the revolters with almost unlimited offers of pay, pardon, and protection. These propositions were not only rejected with disdain, but the messengers were actually

delivered up by them to congress; and having obtained a promise of the redress of grievances, they soon returned to their duty. BOOK XX. 1781.

An expedition under the conduct of general Arnold and general Philips was soon after this undertaken into Virginia, where they signalized themselves by laying waste the country, and did much damage to the Americans by the destruction of an immense quantity of provisions, merchandize, and stores, deposited in different parts; and a permanent station was established at Portsmouth, in order to co-operate with lord Cornwallis, whose transactions to the southward were still carried on with spirit and success. A plan having been formed between the French and American commanders, count Rochambeau and general Washington, to invest the post occupied by general Arnold, a warm engagement took place in the month of March between admiral Arbuthnot and a French squadron under M. Destouches, at the entrance of the Chesapeak, in which the former obtained the advantage, and was left master of the navigation of the bay; and in his dispatches to the Admiralty, the naval commander writes, "The count Rochambeau must seek another opportunity of visiting Virginia—the plan of the REBEL campaign is entirely disconcerted." But the event of the campaign ill corresponded with the confidence of this prediction.

At the conclusion of the year 1780, general Gates,

BOOK XX. 1781.

whose recent disasters had obliterated the memory of his former successes, was superseded in his command by general Green, a man who, in military talents, appears to have been inferior to no officer employed in the service of the American States during this war. Early in the month of January, 1781, lord Cornwallis began his march to North Carolina, general Green retiring at his approach beyond the Pedee, having previously detached colonel Morgan at the head of the light troops to the westward of the Wateree, to penetrate into South Carolina, and watch the motions of the English at Wynnesborough and Camden. Lord Cornwallis, not choosing to leave so considerable a corps in his rear, ordered colonel Tarleton, at the head of a superior force, and who had been hitherto uniformly successful in all his enterprises, to drive Morgan from his station.

Col. Tarleton defeated at the Cowpens.

On the 17th of January the Americans were discovered posted at a place called the Cowpens, near an open wood, and drawn up in two lines; the first of which consisted of militia only, the second of continental infantry and Virginia riflemen; and a chosen body of cavalry was posted as a *corps de reserve* at some distance in the rear. Colonel Tarleton led on the attack with his usual impetuosity; and the American militia, as colonel Morgan had foreseen, gave way on all quarters. The British then advanced, secure of victory, to the attack of the se-

cond line; and the continentals, after an obstinate conflict, retreated towards the cavalry. In the mean time the militia had formed again, agreeably to their previous orders, on the right of the continentals; and the American *corps de reserve*, perceiving the British troops disordered in the pursuit, now came forward to the attack—the militia and continentals at the same time vigorously charging with fixed bayonets. Nothing could exceed the astonishment of the British troops at these unexpected charges. The advanced corps immediately fell back, and communicated a general confusion and panic, which all the efforts of colonel Tarleton could not remedy. Such was the precipitate flight of the cavalry, that the officers, in attempting to rally their men, were overborne and carried away with the torrent; and the greatest part of the infantry, perceiving themselves abandoned, threw down their arms and begged for quarter. The cannon, colours, and baggage-waggons, with more than 700 prisoners, fell into the hands of the victors. Colonel Morgan received, as he well deserved, the thanks of the congress, accompanied with a gold medal, for this important victory, which left his antagonist destitute of all consolation, excepting that arising from the consciousness of his own gallant personal exertions; and colonel Tarleton might exclaim in the language of Francis I. after the fatal defeat of Pavia, "All is lost except our honor!"

BOOK XX. 1782.

Instead of being overwhelmed with their repeated disasters, the Americans seemed to rise with fresh courage from each misfortune. The affair of Cowpens, which so soon followed the defeat of major Ferguson, might have sufficed to deter an officer less enterprising than lord Cornwallis from prosecuting his bold and hazardous projects. His lordship, who in his public dispatches styled the defeat of Tarleton an unexpected and severe blow, in the hope of recovering the prisoners captured at the Cowpens, and intercepting the victorious Americans, immediately marched with the greater part of his army by rapid movements in pursuit of colonel Morgan. That officer had crossed the Catawba a few hours only before the arrival of lord Cornwallis on its southern banks, where, by heavy rains, he was detained two or three days.

On the 1st of February, however, the passage was found practicable; but colonel Morgan had by this time crossed the Yadkin, and effected his junction with general Green, who, on the 5th, wrote confidentially to a military correspondent, general Huger, that he was preparing to receive the enemy's attack. "It is," says he, "not improbable, from lord Cornwallis's pushing disposition, and the contempt he has for our army, that he may precipitate himself into some capital misfortune." At length the whole American army, after crossing the Dan into Virginia, suddenly returned into the province

of North Carolina; and with powerful reinforcements took (March 14) a strong position near Guildford Court-house. At day-break, on the 15th, lord Cornwallis advanced to the attack of the Americans, who were ready formed in three lines to receive him. Through the misbehaviour of the North-Carolina militia, who were posted in front, the British troops soon forced their way to the second line, composed of Virginians, who made a much better defence, and, when at length thrown into disorder, effected a good retreat. The continental troops, who formed the third line, were last engaged; and here the contest was long and severe: but the British ultimately carried their point by superiority of numbers and discipline. The Maryland brigade being broken, an attempt was made to turn the flank of the Americans, and to surround the continental troops; on which general Green drew off the army, and left the field of battle, with the artillery, consisting of four field-pieces, to the enemy. The Americans retired in good order, and took post behind a river, three miles only from the scene of action. This victory, for so it must be called, had, according to the observation of the commander in chief, sir Henry Clinton, all the consequences of a defeat. The royal army was too much disabled and weakened to pursue the enemy. And we are told by a writer who was himself an officer and commissary in the army of lord Cornwallis (Mr.

BOOK XX.

1781. Victory of lord Cornwallis at Guildford.

BOOK XX. 1782.

Stedman), "that the British troops remained near two days without subsistence; that they were destitute of tents, and that the night succeeding the battle was remarkable for its darkness—the rain at the same time falling in torrents. Many of the wounded, sinking under their aggravated miseries, expired before morning. The cries of the wounded and dying who remained on the field of action," says he, "exceed all description. Such a complicated scene of horror and distress, it is hoped for the sake of humanity, rarely occurs, even in a military life." But such are the triumphs of war—and such the picture of those miseries which the accursed spirit of pride and domination has in all ages created, and which men, lost to the feelings of humanity, and remote from the scene of action, regard with calm indifference, or even for the most part as a matter of agreeable amusement and curiosity.

This was an affair very different from that of Camden; and, instead of pursuing the advantages thus dearly purchased on the part of the English by the loss of 600 veteran troops, the British general found himself under the necessity, in order to procure the requisite supplies for his army, to direct his march towards Wilmington, situated near the mouth of Cape-Fear river, a post already occupied by a detachment of British troops, where he arrived on the 7th of April.

General Green, perceiving lord Cornwallis reduced to a state of reluctant inaction, immediately, by a bold and decisive manœuvre, directed his march to the southward, and unexpectedly attacked the important post of Camden. This was gallantly maintained by lord Rawdon; but the surrounding stations of Fort-Motte, Orangeburg, Congarees, and Augusta, being successively forced, his lordship was compelled to evacuate Camden, and retire to the south of the Santee. General Green then laid close siege to the town or township of Ninety-six*, which was considered as commanding the whole of the back country; and on the approach of lord Rawdon, who had recently received great reinforcements from England, attempted to storm the garrison, but was repulsed with loss by colonel Cruger, the governor, and retired with his army behind the Saluda. Being advised by divers of his officers, on this misfortune, to retreat back to Virginia, he replied with true military enthusiasm, "I will recover the country, or die in the attempt." Thus, in situations where feeble minds droop and languish, the ardor of genius burns with redoubled lustre. No sooner was the British army divided and weakened by the several detachments necessary to occupy their former posts, than general Green again crossed the

BOOK XX. 1782. General Green's masterly conduct.

* This singular name had its origin in the number of miles which denoted the distance of the settlement from the town of Kecowée in the Cherokee country.

BOOK XX. 1782.

Saluda in force. Lord Rawdon, surprised and unprepared for action, retired to Orangeburg; and the important post of Ninety-six, so gallantly defended, was now evacuated. The garrison joining lord Rawdon, with other troops drawn from the advanced posts, general Green took a strong position on the high hills of Santee, whence he detached different parties to intercept the convoys and beat up the quarters of the English between Orangeburg and Charlestown.

The British, now under the command of colonel Stuart, having advanced to the point of junction between the Wateree and Congaree, in order to cover the country to the south and south-east of those rivers, general Green passed the Congaree with a view to inclose the British army in its present insulated situation, or compel them to retreat towards Charlestown. Colonel Stuart immediately fell back forty miles, to a place called Eutaw Springs, where he took an advantageous position, his right extending to the Eutaw, and his left to a rising ground which was occupied by a *corps de reserve*. General Green, with the American army, advanced, September 8, 1781, to the attack with the greatest resolution. The Virginian and Maryland continentals charged the left wing of the British with trailed arms through a heavy cannonade and shower of musquetry, and bore down all before them. The American cavalry, at the same time, turned the left

flank of the British, and attacked them in the rear. The whole army gave way in great confusion; but in their retreat, gaining an open field, they were, with much address, rallied by colonel Stuart, and formed again under protection of an effective and well-directed fire from a large and moated house, which served them in the stead of a redoubt; and from whence the Americans, after repeated efforts, were not able to dislodge them. And the right wing of the British pressing on the left flank of the Americans, general Green thought proper to order a retreat, leaving four pieces of artillery in the hands of the British, two of which had been taken by the Americans in the early part of the engagement. The English were in no condition to pursue, and general Green carried off with him all his wounded, and several hundred prisoners. Also about five hundred men were killed and wounded on the part of the British, by the account of colonel Stuart, in this well-contested battle, in which the officers on each side fought hand to hand, and sword to sword. The loss of the Americans in all these respects was much inferior; but as colonel Stuart was left in possession of the field and several pieces of cannon, he claimed, agreeably to military etiquette, the honor of the victory;—but he might well exclaim with the monarch of Epirus, "Such another victory, and I am undone!"

BOOK XX. 1782.

BOOK XX. 1782.

In the evening of the next day he abandoned the Eutaw, and moved towards Charlestown, after destroying a great part of his stores, leaving behind him many of his wounded, and about a thousand stand of arms. This engagement was decisive of the fate of the war in the southern colonies—the British not being able from this time to appear in the open field, and scarcely could they maintain their posts in the vicinity of Charlestown and Savannah; and in the course of the next year those towns were finally evacuated.

Military character of general Green.

The military talents of general Green appear in a most striking point of view, on the recollection that, notwithstanding a succession of what in military language must be styled defeats, he finally effected his object, by recovering both the Carolinas in the space of less than twelve months. At Guildford, at Camden, at Ninety-six, at the Eutaw Springs, the British commanders claimed the honors of the field, but the Americans reaped all the profit of these engagements. The plans of the American general were so happily concerted, his movements so judiciously timed, his vigilance so unwearied, his firmness and perseverance so heroic, that he might be regarded as the controller rather than the favorite of fortune;—and his measures were taken wit such superior sagacity, that they not only merited, but, in a certain sense, commanded success.

Lord Cornwallis, to whose operations it is now necessary to revert, on the march of general Green's army to the southward, found himself reduced to a perplexing dilemma—either to abandon the Carolinas to their fate, or sacrifice his hopes of future conquests, and entirely disappoint the high and sanguine expectations, which he knew to be formed in England, of the result of the present campaign. His pride at length overbalancing his prudence, he determined to prosecute his march to Virginia. BOOK XX. 1781. Lord Cornwallis's successes in Virginia.

The Roanoke, the Meherrin, and the Nottaway rivers were successively crossed by the British army with trifling opposition; and on the 20th of May his lordship arrived at Petersburg, where he was joined by the powerful detachment recently conducted thither by generals Arnold and Philips. The force under his lordship's command was now very formidable; and the marquis de la Fayette, who was at the head of the troops collected for the defence of the province, was compelled to keep a guarded distance, and conducted himself with so much judgment, that no considerable advantage could be obtained against him. From Petersburg lord Cornwallis advanced to James River, which he crossed at West Town; and, thence marching through Hanover County, crossed the South Anna or Pamunky river, whence by a rapid movement colonel Tarleton had nearly surprised the assembly of Virginia, now sitting at Charlotte-ville.

BOOK XX. 1782.

Various expeditions were undertaken to different parts of the province, with uniform success; and lord Cornwallis, by a well-concerted manœuvre, having taken a position between the American army and its grand *dépôt* of stores at Albemarle Court-house, could not avoid exulting in his superiority. Knowing that the marquis de la Fayette was on his march to prevent that important capture, and believing that he could not make his approach but with great disadvantage and hazard, he in an unguarded moment exclaimed, "The boy cannot escape me!" But the marquis had the address to extricate himself from this difficulty, by opening in the night a nearer and long-disused road to the Court-house; and the next day, to the surprise of lord Cornwallis, he had taken a position which effectually covered it from attack.

Lord Cornwallis, finding his plan frustrated, proceeded to Williamsburg, the capital of the province, which he took possession of, June 26th, without opposition. Here he received advices from sir Henry Clinton, which informed him, that the commander-in-chief, conceiving New York to be in danger from the united forces of the French and Americans, desired the troops under general Arnold, which he had detached to Virginia, to be returned. This was the beginning of disasters. With this requisition lord Cornwallis was compelled, however reluctantly, to comply. Knowing that his adversary had

Reverse of fortune.

been lately reinforced by a strong body of troops under general Wayne, he did not think his present force adequate to maintain his station at Williamsburg; he therefore determined to cross James River to Portsmouth. BOOK XX. 1781.

From false intelligence general Wayne arrived with the van of the American army on the banks of the river, in expectation of attacking the rear of the British, unfortunately before any part of the army had passed. Perceiving his mistake, he deemed it the best policy to charge boldly, though his corps did not amount to more than eight hundred men. After sustaining a very unequal conflict for some time with great resolution, Wayne ordered a rapid retreat; and lord Cornwallis, amazed at the circumstances of this attack, and suspecting that it must be meant to draw him into an ambuscade, forbade all pursuit; and thus the courage of Wayne, as it often happens, availed more to his safety than if he had acted with the most timid and scrupulous caution. In the night lord Cornwallis passed over to Portsmouth, where he purposed to establish his head-quarters; but, on further deliberation, removed to York Town, as the more eligible situation. Retreat to York Town.

Hitherto the plan of the campaign on the part of general Washington had wavered in uncertainty. He had long and seriously meditated an attack upon New York, and general Clinton had good reason to

BOOK XX. 1782.

believe that this was finally determined upon at an interview between the American general and count Rochambeau, which took place in May; and in consequence of this project, great preparations were made in the vicinity of New York, indicatory of an approaching siege. But the arrival of considerable reinforcements from England, and the recall of so large a body of troops from Virginia, led general Washington, in his dispatch of July 30th, to observe, "that from this change of circumstances they should probably entirely change their plan of operations."

At length a letter from count de Grasse, stating that his destination was unalterably fixed to the Chesapeak, left no alternative; and a joint answer was immediately sent by the American and French generals, that they would lose no time in removing the army to the south of the Delawar, there to meet the admiral. All the appearances of an attack upon New York were, however, still carefully kept up, till at length, on the 24th of August, the allied army suddenly decamped, passed the North River, and by rapid marches proceeded to Philadelphia, where they arrived on the 30th; the fleet of count de Grasse, consisting of twenty-four ships of the line, entering nearly at the same time the bay of Chesapeak.

So strongly impressed was the mind of the British commander-in-chief with the notion of an attack

upon New York, that he for a long time conceived the southern march of the American army to be only a feint. But at length, finding that the van of the American army had actually passed the Delaware, and receiving authentic intelligence that the fleet of count de Grasse was destined to the Chesapeak, he communicated, as he tells us, his SUSPICIONS to lord Cornwallis; at the same time assuring his lordship, "that he would either reinforce him by every possible means in his power, or make the best diversion he could in his favor." BOOK XX. 1782.

Doubtless in this critical situation the most unlimited discretion ought to have been vested in lord Cornwallis, considering the extreme uncertainty of affording him timely and effectual succour, either to have retreated to Carolina, or to have attacked the enemy previous to the arrival of the combined army. "But being assured," to use the words of lord Cornwallis, "that every possible means would be tried by the navy and army for his relief, he did not think himself *at liberty* to attempt either, though he had so unfavorable an opinion of the post he occupied, that nothing but these assurances would have induced him to attempt its defence."

It is evident that the leading ideas of the two British generals did not coincide; and it may be remarked, that from the moment lord Cornwallis began to act in subordination to orders sent him from New York he ceased to be successful—So essential

BOOK XX. 1782

is it that the supreme command should reside in the centre of action. The commander-in-chief was at this period no more than the governor of a distant garrison; but had sir Henry Clinton joined lord Cornwallis in person at his entrance into Virginia, or had the supreme command been then transferred to lord Cornwallis, the campaign, so far as we are authorised to draw a conclusion from concurring probabilities, would not have terminated so disastrously.

On the 5th of September, the English fleet, consisting of nineteen ships of the line under admiral Graves, appeared off the Capes of Virginia; and count de Grasse, expecting a reinforcement from Rhode Island, stood out to sea for their protection. A warm engagement ensued, in which the English appear *not* to have obtained the advantage; and the count de Grasse, being joined by the squadron of M. Barras, was left undisputed master of the Chesapeak. Relief was from this time wholly impracticable; and lord Cornwallis withdrew within his works, making every preparation for a vigorous defence. The military talents of this commander, though of no mean rate, were nevertheless unequal to so novel and perilous an exigency.

On the 17th of September the superior sagacity of general Green pronounced, in writing to his military friend and correspondent baron Steuben, "Nothing can save lord Cornwallis but a rapid retreat

through North Carolina to Charlestown." But his lordship still lingered, and still indulged eager and fruitless hopes of succour. York Town being situated nearly at the extremity of a narrow peninsula, inclosed between York River to the north and James River to the south, it was invested with great ease and advantage by an enemy who commanded the navigation of the two rivers.

On the 14th of October the besiegers, notwithstanding the well-directed and incessant fire of the enemy, had advanced far in their second parallel. Being greatly incommoded in their approaches by two redoubts at the distance of two hundred yards from the British lines, it was determined to attack them at the same time by different detachments of French and Americans. Actuated by the spirit of emulation, both redoubts were carried sword in hand with resistless impetuosity. On marching to the assault, the general exclamation was, "Remember New London!" a place on the coast of Connecticut, which the renegade Arnold, in one of his predatory expeditions, had recently taken and destroyed, putting the troops which defended it to the sword. On the submission, nevertheless, of the British stationed in the two redoubts, their lives were spared: and when the Americans were afterwards interrogated why they did not carry their previous resolve into execution, they replied, "they could not tell

BOOK XX. 1782.

how to put men to death while begging on their knees for quarter." By this time the batteries of the besiegers were covered with one hundred pieces of heavy ordnance; and the British works, enfiladed in almost every part, and nearly demolished, could scarcely mount a single gun. In this extremity no other resource remained than to endeavour to transport the garrison across York River to Glocester Point, opposite to York Town, where works had been also erected, and were still occupied by part of the British army. But this intention being totally frustrated by a violent storm after the embarkation had actually commenced, lord Cornwallis was reduced to the hard and terrible necessity of proposing terms of capitulation, which were granted only on condition of his lordship's surrendering himself, and the forces under his command, to the amount of above 7000 men, prisoners of war. The honor of marching out with colors flying, which had been refused to general Lincoln on his giving up Charlestown, was now refused to lord Cornwallis; and general Lincoln was appointed to receive the submission of the army of York Town precisely in the same way his own had been conducted eighteen months before.

Lord Cornwallis and his army made prisoners of war.

Such was the final issue of the eager hopes and sanguine expectations excited by the first brilliant successes of this noble and gallant commander.

The joy of the Americans on the capture of a second royal army was unbounded. In a circuitous march of 1100 miles, from Charlestown to Williamsburg, every place through which they passed had experienced the effects of their rapacity: and instead of endeavouring to conciliate the minds of the inhabitants by acts of lenity, they alienated even those who were most friendly, by their relentless and systematic severity. Yet was lord Cornwallis, as an individual, generous, disinterested, and humane; but the favorite and avowed maxim of the British government at this time, a maxim from which the military commanders seem not to have thought themselves at liberty to depart, was, "that the extreme of rigor, by making the war intolerable, and resistance hopeless, was *in effect* the greatest mercy, and the mode of all others to be adopted, therefore, by the *parental affection of Britain*, for reclaiming his majesty's *deluded subjects* of America." A marble column, with a suitable inscription and trophies, was ordered by the congress to be erected at York Town, in commemoration of this glorious and decisive event; and a solemn thanksgiving to Almighty God, was appointed throughout all the States of the Union, "for the signal successes with which he had vouchsafed to bless the armies of America, combating in defence of their rights and liberties."

Solemn thanksgiving throughout all the States of the Union.

BOOK XX.

The remaining miscellaneous transactions of the year must now be succinctly noticed.

1782. Commodore Johnstone's expedition to the Cape of Good Hope.

Early in the spring governor Johnstone, late one of the commissioners to America, was invested with a naval command, and with a considerable squadron was detached on an expedition to the Cape of Good Hope. The court of Versailles, knowing the present inability of the States General to protect their foreign dominions, sent a superior squadron under M. Suffrein, to counteract the designs of the English; and coming up with them at port Praya, in the island of St. Jago, the French admiral scrupled not to violate the neutrality of the Portuguese flag, by attacking the squadron of commodore Johnstone while it lay dispersed and scattered, unsuspicious of danger, in the harbour. Happily the French, rather by extraordinary efforts of valor on the part of the British seamen, than of skill on that of their commander, were beaten off; but immediately proceeding to the Cape, they effectually secured that important settlement from any hostile attempt. Commodore Johnstone, on his subsequent and tardy arrival, was obliged to content himself with the capture of several Dutch East-Indiamen in Saldanha Bay; and those of his ships which were destined for the East Indies prosecuting their voyage thither, the commodore returned home with his prizes from his inglorious though lucrative expedition.

In the course of the summer an engagement took place off the Dogger Bank, between an English squadron commanded by admiral Hyde Parker, and a Dutch squadron of equal force under admiral Zoutman, who had under convoy the Baltic trade bound to the Texel. On perceiving the English fleet bearing down, the Dutch admiral, who was to leeward, lay-to, and the English were suffered to approach within half musquet shot without firing a gun, when a dreadful cannonade commenced, which was kept up without interruption for three hours and forty minutes; and the action then ceased only because the ships on both sides, from the damages they had respectively sustained, were no longer sound manageable. The Dutch, after some time, bore away with their convoy for the Texel, which they reached with great difficulty, one of their largest ships sinking before they could make the harbour.

BOOK XX. 1781.

Obstinate engagement between the English and Dutch fleets, off the Dogger Bank.

Admiral Parker, who had unavailingly applied to the admiralty for a reinforcement, returned in great discontent and in a shattered condition to the Nore, where he received the signal honor of a visit from his majesty on board his own ship, and was offered *knighthood* as the reward of his valor. But a haughty refusal showed how little he was flattered by these petty and puerile distinctions; and no acts of royal condescension could alter his resolution of resigning his command.

BOOK XX. 1781.

The Dutch on their part bestowed rewards more liberal and solid on the officers and sailors of their fleet, and admiral Zoutman was received at Amsterdam with great applause and acclamation: and the event of this remarkable action showed, that the Dutch seamen were still possessed of that determined courage which had distinguished them in the days of De Ruyter and Van Tromp.

About this time the emperor, now resident in the Netherlands, issued a placart, by which Ostend was declared to be a free port; and in the month of October he acceded in form to the armed neutrality, as the kings of Prussia and Portugal had also previously done.

Spirited proceedings of the parliament and people of Ireland.

Notwithstanding the great concessions made by the parliament of Great Britain to the people of Ireland, that country, finding its own strength, remained in a state far short of satisfaction: for it had still much to ask, or rather to demand. The army on the Irish establishment had been hitherto invariably governed and directed by the sole prerogative of the monarch; but as the spirit of liberty and independence increased, a Mutiny Bill, on the model of the English, had been recently introduced into the Irish parliament, and passed into a perpetual law. But a measure originally highly popular was now the subject of loud complaint; and it was affirmed, not without reason, that liberty could never be secured on just and constitutional grounds

so long as the monarch was irrevocably invested with the unlimited power of the sword; that in England the Mutiny Bill was passed only from year to year, and in the very preamble of it standing armies without the consent of parliament are declared illegal; the troops themselves, the law that regulated, and the power that commands them, are by this bill limited to one year. Thus was the army of England rendered a parliamentary army, and the constitutional ascendency of the subject over the soldier preserved. BOOK XX. 1781.

In numerous county and provincial meetings the supremacy of the British parliament was in formal resolves positively denied, and the absolute independence of Ireland on the British legislature boldly asserted. The unconstitutional powers of the Irish privy council, where, agreeably to the famous law of Poyning, all laws must originate, were reprobated, a Habeas-Corpus Act louldly called for, the abolition of all superfluous places and pensions insisted upon. The zeal and activity of the military associations sufficiently evinced their determination to enforce their claims by a mode of application which was in no danger of being disregarded.

BOOK XXI.

SESSION of Parliament—Infatuation of Ministers. Motion condemnatory of the American War by Sir James Lowther. Remarkable Debate on the Army Estimates. Lord George Germaine advanced to the Peerage under Circumstances of unprecedented Indignity and Disgrace. Mr. Fox renews his Motion of Censure upon Lord Sandwich, in which Two Hundred and Seventeen Members of the House of Commons concur. General Conway's Motion against the American War negatived by a Majority of One Voice only. General Conway's Second Motion carried by a Majority of Nineteen Voices. Successive Motions of Censure on the Ministers. Entire Change of Administration—Marquis of Rockingham a Second Time Minister. High and peremptory Claims of the Irish Parliament. Repeal of the Irish Declaratory Act. Mr. Burke's Reform Bill a Third Time introduced and passed. King's Debts a Third Time discharged. Resolution respecting the Middlesex Election rescinded. Mr. Pitt's Motion of Inquiry into the State of the Representation. Death of the Marquis of Rockingham. Advancement of Earl Shelburne—Fatal Divisions amongst the Whigs. Minorca conquered by the Spaniards. Island of St. Christopher, &c. captured by the French. The Bahamas taken by the Spaniards. Decisive Victory of Sir George Rodney over the French off Dominique. Glorious Defence and final Relief of Gibraltar. Provisional Articles of Peace with America signed at Paris, November 1782. *General Washington resigns his Commission. Session of Parliament—Strength of the New Ministry. Preliminaries of Peace with France and Spain signed. Debates on the Peace—Terms of it disapproved by the Commons. Coalition between Mr. Fox and Lord North. Change of Ministry—*

Duke of Portland First Minister. Extreme Unpopularity of the Coalition Administration. Act of Renunciation of the Authority of Great Britain over Ireland. Embarrassments of the East-India Company. Mr. Pitt's Plan of Parliamentary Reform. Remarkable Petition of the Quakers. Order of Council for the Regulation of Commerce between the Continent of America and the West Indies. Treaty of Peace signed between England and Holland. State of Europe. Mr. Fox's India Bill moved—Passes the Commons, but is rejected by the Lords. Sudden Dismission of the Coalition Ministers. Mr. Pitt First Minister—His great Popularity. Political Conflict between the Crown and the Commons. Mr. Pitt's India Bill rejected. The Nation declares in favor of the Crown. The Parliament dissolved. Meeting of the New Parliament—Triumph of the Minister.

BOOK XXI.

1781. Session of parliament. Speech from the throne.

THE second session of the present parliament commenced at Westminster on the 27th of November, 1781. In the speech from the throne his majesty observed, "That the war was still unhappily prolonged, and that, to his great concern, the events of it had been very unfortunate to his army in Virginia, having ended in the total loss of his forces in that province. But he could not consent to sacrifice, either to his own desire of peace or to the temporary ease and relief of his subjects, those essential rights and permanent interests upon which the strength and security of this country must ever principally depend." His majesty declared, "that he retained a firm confidence in the protection of Divine Providence, and A PERFECT CONVICTION of the JUSTICE of his CAUSE;"—and he concluded

BOOK XXI. 1781.

by calling "for the concurrence and support of parliament, and a VIGOROUS, ANIMATED, and UNITED EXERTION of the FACULTIES and RESOURCES of his PEOPLE." Upon the whole, this speech was plainly indicatory of a fixed and resolute determination to prosecute a war, of which it might well be supposed that "fools as gross as ignorance made drunk" might by this time have seen the hopelessness and the absurdity.

Character of the KING.

The monarch had now swayed the sceptre of these kingdoms more than twenty years, and, in the course of a long and variegated series of events, his character both personal and political was completely matured and developed. The province of history is sacred; and in the delineation of the different personages whom she exhibits on the grand theatre of human action, she equally disdains injustice to the meanest and adulation to the highest individual. The capacity of this prince—whose reign will be memorable to all succeeding ages—little cultivated by education, and unimproved in early youth by a liberal intercourse with men of genius and discernment, was by universal acknowledgment of a class which had no pretensions to native superiority. In his conduct upon all occasions an invincible pertinacity was discoverable, which it would be easy for the flatterers of a court to dignify with the appellation of firmness. His acknowledged rectitude of intention was clouded by the absence

of the nobler sensibilities of humanity. Never was it suspected that the contest by which an empire was rent asunder, by which every political, civil and social tie was dissolved that can unite and endear nation to nation, or man to man, cost this monarch a sigh or a tear. BOOK XXI. 1781.

Attached to the forms of the church with a degree of zeal more nearly allied to bigotry and superstition than to an enlarged and enlightened morality, he regarded all the sects which diverged from it in different directions, with a fixed suspicion and dislike, leading by easy and imperceptible gradations to dread and detestation. The reverse of the medal will indeed discover a life passed without any remarkable deviation from the rules of decorum, and much less any direct violation of the higher and more serious obligations of morality and religion. Grave, temperate, devout—from the contamination of those vices which are usually considered as more peculiarly characteristic of courts, he was wholly free. But the virtues of the man, were they such as to entitle him to the honors of canonization, afforded a very inadequate compensation for the errors and imperfections of the monarch; under whose reign it may be justly affirmed, that from the almost perpetual predominance of evil councils, the people suffered all that could be inflicted under the restraints of a constitution radically excellent.

BOOK XXI. 1781. Memorable debate on the address.

The speech from the throne underwent, as may well be imagined, the severest animadversion. Mr. Fox said he had expected, and he knew it had been expected by many others, to hear on this occasion his majesty declare from the throne that he had been deceived and imposed upon by misinformation and misrepresentation; that, in consequence of his delusion, the parliament had been deluded, but that now the deception was at an end; and requesting of his parliament to devise the most speedy and efficacious means of putting an end to the public calamities:—instead of which they had heard a speech breathing little else than vengeance, misery, and blood. Those who *were ignorant of the personal character of the sovereign*, and who imagined this speech to originate with him, might be led to suppose that he was an unfeeling despot, rejoicing in the horrid sacrifice of the liberty and lives of his subjects, who, when all hope of victory was vanished, still thirsted for revenge. The ministers who advised this speech he affirmed to be a CURSE to the country over the affairs of which they [illegible] too long been suffered to reside. From th[illegible] rivalled pre-eminence [illegible] we so lately [illegible] they had made us [illegible] t of ridic[illegible] to the surroun[illegible]g [illegible] Th[illegible] *blue ribband* had [illegible] American war: [illegible] speeches of [illegible]

pable minister, whose measures are framed with so little foresight, and executed with so little firmness, that, because a rash or intemperate invective is uttered against them in the house of commons, they shall instantly crumble in pieces, and bring down ruin upon the country!—Miserable statesman! to allow for no contingences of fortune, no ebullition of passion, no collision of sentiment! Could he expect the concurrence of every individual in that house? and was he so weak or wicked as to contrive plans of government of such a texture that the intervention of circumstances obvious and unavoidable would occasion their total failure, and hazard the existence of the empire? Ministers must expect to hear of the calamities in which they had involved the empire, again and again—not merely in that house, but, as he trusted, at the tribunal of justice;—"for (said he) the time will surely come, when an oppressed and irritated people will firmly call for SIGNAL PUNISHMENT on those whose counsels have brought the nation so near to the brink of destruction. An indignant nation will surely in the end compel them to make some faint atonement for the magnitude of their offences, on a PUBLIC SCAFFOLD." He concluded with moving, "That of the address proposed the whole be omitted excepting the first paragraph, and the following words inserted:—'And we will without delay apply our-

BOOK XXI. 1781.

selves with united hearts to propose and digest such counsels as may in this crisis excite the efforts, point the arms, and, by a total change of system, command the confidence, of all his majesty's subjects.' "

This amendment was vigorously supported by Mr. Pitt, who declared, "That the duty he owed his sovereign and his country compelled him to exert every effort to prevent the house from precipitately voting an address which pledged them to the support of that fatal system which had led this country, step by step, to the most calamitous and disgraceful situation to which a once flourishing and glorious empire could be reduced.—Was it becoming the parliament of a free people to echo back the words which a minister, long practised in the arts of delusion, had dared to put into the royal mouth? He implored the house not to vote for an address fraught with treachery and falsehood, which could not have been framed by any who felt for the honor of the king, the dignity of parliament, or the interest of the nation."

Mr. Burke drew a most striking picture of the losses and disasters which had been sustained through the egregious folly and misconduct of the present administration. "Under such circumstances the language held by the noble lord was (he said) audacious; it was insulting." Mr. Burke declared

that he deplored and mourned over the calamities of his country: but to see the noble lord stand up in the face of day, and hear him *impudently* vindicate the measures which had given birth to them—this was most of all alarming—this it was which froze his blood and harrowed up his soul!" Mr. Burke ridiculed with keen and exquisite poignancy the stress so absurdly laid on the supposed original and inherent right of Great Britain to exercise taxation over America. "Oh inestimable right!" exclaimed Mr. Burke, "Oh wonderful transcendent right! the assertion of which has cost this country thirteen provinces, six islands, 100,000 lives, and seventy millions of money! Oh invaluable right! for the sake of which we have sacrificed our rank among nations, our importance abroad, and our happiness at home! Oh right! more dear to us than our existence; which has already cost us so much, and which seems likely to cost us our all!—Infatuated man!" cried Mr. Burke, fixing his eye on the minister: "Miserable and undone country! not to know that the claim of right, without the power of enforcing it, is nugatory and idle! 'We had a right to tax America,' the noble lord tells us, 'therefore we ought to tax America.' This is the profound logic which comprises the whole chain of his reasoning. Not inferior to this was the wisdom of him who resolved to shear the wolf. What! shear a wolf? Have you considered

BOOK XXI. 1781.

BOOK XXI. 1781.

the resistance, the difficulty, the danger of the attempt? 'No,' says the madman, 'I have considered nothing but the right. Man has a right of dominion over the beasts of the forest, and therefore I will shear the wolf.' How wonderful that a nation could be thus deluded! But the noble lord dealt in cheats and delusions. They were the daily traffic of his invention. And he would continue to play off his *cheats* on that house so long as he thought them necessary to his purpose, and so long as he had money enough at command to bribe gentlemen to pretend that they believed him. But a black and bitter day of reckoning would surely come; and whenever that day came, he trusted that he should be able, by a PARLIAMENTARY IMPEACHMENT, to bring upon the heads of the authors of our calamities the punishment they deserved."

An amendment of the same import with that proposed by Mr. Fox was moved in the upper house by the earl of Shelburne, and supported by the duke of Richmond, who declared "the misfortunes of this country to be owing to that wretched system of government which had been early adopted in the reign of his present majesty, and to the influence of that INTERIOR CABINET which (he said) had been the ruin of this country;" and he recalled to the recollection of the house the memorable declaration of the late earl of Chatham, 'that he was

duped and deceived, and that he had not been ten days in the cabinet before he felt the ground rotten under his feet.' BOOK XXI. 1781.

In both houses, however, the addresses were carried by great majorities, and a most melancholy and alarming prospect presented itself to the nation, of a fatal perseverance in a war which, from an involuntary and irresistible conviction universally impressed, was now regarded as desperate, and passionately deprecated as tending to certain and remediless ruin.

In a very few days, a motion being made by sir Grey Cooper for the house to resolve itself into a committee of supply, a vehement debate arose. Mr. Fox, in the course of a most animated speech, asked "if ministers would give any satisfactory assurance to the house, that the military forces which should hereafter be sent across the Atlantic would be employed more successfully or honorably than those which had already been sent thither? Did the American secretary wish to dispatch a third army to America, that general Washington might a third time receive them as prisoners of war? Did he wish that more British troops should be devoted to slaughter, captivity, and disgrace? Notwithstanding the defeat and dishonor which had attended the measures of administration, they had yet discovered no signs of humiliation or penitence. Instead of acknowledging that they turned their eyes with in-

BOOK XXI. 1791.

quietude and shame upon the criminal expenditure of fruitless millions, they did not blush to move for an increase of grants, that they might prosecute, till ruin should have stopped their infamous career, hostilities which were the result of barbarous ambition, of implacable malevolence, of a detestation of liberty, of a contempt for every principle of justice, equity, and honor."

The ministers were so vigorously pushed in this debate, and seemed so utterly incapable of defending themselves or their measures, that it was probably a welcome surprise to them, to find in their favor, on the division, 172 voices to 77.

Motion condemnatory of the American war by sir James Lowther.

It being understood that preparations were making for another embarkation of troops from Ireland to America, a very important motion was on the 12th of December made by sir James Lowther, "That it be resolved by the house, that the war carried on against the colonies and plantations of North America had been ineffectual to the purposes for which it was undertaken; and that it was also the opinion of this house that all further attempts to reduce the Americans to obedience by force must be injurious to this country, by weakening her powers to resist her antient and confederated enemies." In support of this motion, which was indeed the plain dictate of common sense, the mover observed, "that the late speech from the throne had given a just alarm to the nation—it had shown

them that the ministers were determined to persevere in the American war—that more blood and more money were to be lavished in this fatal contest—the men invested with the powers of government derived no advantage from experience—the surrender of one army only gave them spirit to risk a second, and the surrender of the second only instigated them to venture a third. There was no end of loss nor of madness. The unexampled ignorance and misconduct of the ministry were now visible to all the world. It was therefore become the indispensable duty of that house to come to some solemn resolution, in order to mark and define their idea of the American war, and to convince their constituents that they were awake to the real situation of the country."

The motion was seconded by Mr. Powys, member for Northamptonshire, who acknowledged, "that a variety of pretexts insidiously advanced by the ministers, and too credulously received by the majority of that house, had seduced them, from one session to another, to move with fatal steps along the path to national destruction. The war with the colonies was the idol of his majesty's ministers; they had bowed before it themselves, and had made the nation bow. The conduct which at the commencement of hostilities might be denominated firmness had now degenerated into obstinacy —an obstinacy which called upon all honest and

BOOK XXI. 1781.

independent men to desert the present administration, unless a change of measures were adopted. That men who were indebted to war for their emoluments, power, and influence, should persevere in such iniquitous and selfish measures, was not extraordinary; but it was a just cause for wonder that they should be supported by individuals of independent principles and independent fortunes. The insidious pretence of revenue was grown too stale for imposition. The American war had been a war of delusion from beginning to end. Every promise had been broken, every assertion had been falsified, every object relinquished. It was now a war of this sort, then a war of that sort; now a war of revenue, then a war of supremacy; now a war of coercion, and then a war of friendship and affection for America. But it was time to put an end to these chicaneries. Whatever might be the nature of the war, no prospect of success in it remained. He therefore not only gave the motion his full concurrence, but he should feel the highest pleasure if it received the general approbation of the house."

This speech bore a very ominous aspect with relation to the ministers; for, Mr. Powys being himself a principal leader of the independent interest, or *country gentlemen*, in the house, there was reason to apprehend the speedy and general defection of that high and haughty class of members: and a mere ministerial majority of placemen and pen-

sioners, it is superfluous to say, affords only a rotten and treacherous support, whenever a surmise prevails that support is really wanted. BOOK XXI. 1781.

In the course of the debate general Burgoyne acknowledged "that he was now convinced the *principle* of the American war was wrong, though he had not been of that opinion when he engaged in the service. Passion and prejudice and interest were now no more, and reason and observation had led him to a very different conclusion: and he now saw that the American war was only one part of a system levelled against the constitution of this country and the general rights of mankind."

Notwithstanding the utmost opposition of the minister, the numbers, on dividing the house, appeared to be 179 in favor of the motion, against 220 who opposed it. This was a majority in which the ministry had little reason to exult. It afresh excited the most sanguine hopes of the public, who, with the exception of the high Tory and prerogative faction, were now perfectly unanimous in their reprobation of the war and its authors.

Debate on the army estimates.

On the 14th of December, two days only after the motion of sir James Lowther, the army estimates were laid before the house by the secretary at war; from which it appeared that the whole military force required for the year 1782, including the provincial corps serving in America, amounted to 195,000 men. One hundred thousand seamen and

BOOK XXI. 1781.

marines had been already voted by the house. It was however stated by lord George Germaine, "that the ministry were of opinion, considering the present situation of affairs, and the misfortunes of the war, that it would not be right to continue any longer the plan on which it had hitherto been conducted; and that a fresh army would not be sent to supply the place of that captured at York Town. It was intended only to preserve such posts in America as might facilitate and co-operate with the enterprises of our fleets."

In the debate which ensued, sir George Saville particularly distinguished himself. "At length, then," said this firm and faithful patriot, "we are given to understand that a change is to be made in the MODE of conducting the American war. The ministers do not intend to prosecute it in the same manner as before. Why? Because they could not if they would. But it appeared that they were determined to prosecute it with all the feeble efforts of which they were yet capable. Being detained in the country by ill health, he had not heard the king's speech on its first delivery: but when it reached him in his retirement, he had read it with HORROR, announcing as it did the continuance of the present war in its most destructive form. As to the address of that house, in answer to the speech, it was a mere echo without meaning, a futile and empty sound. So servile was the dependence of

that house on the executive power, and so little solicitous were they to conceal their dependence, that if the king's speech had contained the line, 'What beauties does Flora disclose!' he doubted not but the address would have filled up the couplet by repeating, 'How sweet are her smiles upon Tweed!' The ministers had lost the two hands of the empire in the prosecution of this frantic and ineffectual war; by a continuance of it they would risk the head. Such a conduct resembled, if it did not indicate, the violence of insanity. Could the house so far forget their dignity, and relinquish their understanding, as not to resist this madness? Would they intrust lunatics with the management of the public purse? Would they place the sword within their hands, and bid them use it at their DISCRETION?"

BOOK XXI. 1781.

General Conway declared himself "anxious for a recall of our fleets and armies from America. Of two evils he would choose the least, and submit to the independence of America, rather than persist in the prosecution of so pernicious and ruinous a war. As to the idea now suggested of a war of posts, what garrisons (he asked) would be able to maintain them, when it was well known that even sir Henry Clinton, at New York, did not consider himself as secure?"

Mr. Fox remarked, "that four years ago, after

BOOK XXI. 1781.

the disaster of Saratoga, the noble lord at the head of affairs had amused the house with the same language. Then the plan of future hostilities was to be differently modified, and the war conducted on a smaller and more contracted scale. On this contracted scale, however, we had lost another great army, besides suffering other grievous defeats and irretrievable calamities."

Mr. Pitt reprobated with the utmost force of language, "as a species of obstinacy bordering upon madness, the idea of any further prosecution of the American war, with our fleets opposed by a superior force, and our armies in captivity. He appealed to the whole house, whether every description of men did not detest and execrate the American war, and whether it were uncharitable to implore the Almighty to shower down his vengeance on the men who were the authors of their country's ruin?"

The impression made by the successive speeches of the principal leaders in opposition in this debate was too great to be concealed; but the estimates, as originally moved, were at length voted by a considerable majority.

Nearly at this time a petition was presented by the city of London to the king, in which the calamities resulting from the war are stated in terms peculiarly impressive and eloquent. In conclusion

they say, "We beseech your majesty no longer to continue in a delusion from which the nation has awakened, and that your majesty will be graciously pleased to relinquish entirely and for ever the plan of reducing our brethren in America by force. And we do further humbly implore your majesty, that your majesty will be graciously pleased to dismiss from your presence and councils all the advisers, *both public and secret*, of the measures we lament, as a pledge to the world of your majesty's fixed determination to abandon a system incompatible with the interest of the crown and the happiness of your people."

Motion of censure on the earl of Sandwich, by Mr. Fox.

Soon after the recess of parliament, Mr. Fox renewed his former motion of censure against the first lord of the admiralty; and such strength had the opposition now acquired, that in a house of near four hundred members it was rejected by a majority of only twenty-two. The unpopularity of the American secretary was so great and manifest, that he now thought it expedient, seeing parliamentary censures likely to become again in fashion, to resign the seals of that department—and for his *eminent services* he was by his majesty raised to the dignity of the peerage. But before the great seal was affixed to the patent, the marquis of Carmarthen moved, in the house of peers, "that it was highly derogatory to the honor of that house, that any person laboring under the sentence of a court-

BOOK XXI. 1781.

martial, styled in the public orders issued by his late majesty 'a censure much worse than death,' and adjudged unfit to serve his majesty in any military capacity, should be recommended to the crown as a proper person to sit in that house."

Lord Geo. Germaine advanced to the peerage.

The motion was evaded by the question of adjournment; but lord George Germaine having actually taken his seat in the house under the title of Lord Viscount Sackville, the marquis of Carmarthen renewed his attack, and urged, "that the house of peers being a court of honor, it behoved them to preserve that honor uncontaminated, and to mark in the most forcible manner their disapprobation of the introduction of a person into that assembly who was stigmatized in the orderly books of every regiment in the service."

Lord Abingdon, who seconded the motion, styled the admission of lord George Germaine to a peerage "an insufferable indignity to that house, and an outrageous insult to the public.—What," said his lordship, "has that person done to merit honors superior to his fellow-citizens? His only claim to promotion was, that he had undone his country by executing the plan of that accursed invisible though efficient cabinet, from whom as he received his orders, so he had obtained his reward."

Lord Sackville, in his own vindication, denied the justice of the sentence passed upon him, and affirmed "that he considered his restoration to the council

board, at a very early period of the present reign, as amounting to a virtual repeal of that iniquitous verdict." BOOK XXI. 1781.

The duke of Richmond strongly defended the motion, and said, "that he himself was present at the battle of Minden, and was summoned on the trial of lord George Germaine; and had his deposition been called for, he could have proved that the time lost when the noble viscount delayed to advance, under pretence of receiving contradictory orders, was not less than *one hour and a half*; that the cavalry were a mile and a quarter only from the scene of action; and it was certainly in his lordship's power to have rendered the victory, important as it was, far more brilliant and decisive; and he had little reason to complain of the severity of the sentence passed upon him."

Lord Southampton also, who, as aide-de-camp to prince Ferdinand on that memorable day, delivered the message of his serene highness to his lordship, vindicated the equity of the sentence.

The motion was likewise powerfully supported by the earl of Shelburne, the marquis of Rockingham, and other distinguished peers.

On the division, nevertheless, it was rejected by a majority of 93 to 28 voices: but to the inexpressible chagrin of lord Sackville, a protest was entered on the journals of the house, declaring the promo- Protest of the lords against it.

BOOK XXI. 1782.

tion of his lordship to be "a measure fatal to the interests of the crown, insulting to the memory of the late sovereign, and highly derogatory to the dignity of that house."

Mr. Fox renews his motion of censure on the earl of Sandwich.

Mr. Fox, on the 20th of February, 1782, again brought forward his motion of censure, somewhat varied, on lord Sandwich; which was negatived by a majority of 19 voices only, in a house consisting of four hundred and fifty-three members: but, to the astonishment of the nation, the noble lord still daringly kept possession of his office, although two hundred and seventeen members of the house of commons had pronounced him "guilty of a shameful mismanagement of the naval affairs of Great Britain." The opposition appearing every day to gain strength in the house of commons, the downfall of the ministry began at length to be confidently predicted.

Gen. Conway's motion against the American war negatived by a majority of one voice only.

On the 22d of February, general Conway moved "for an address to the king, earnestly imploring his majesty, that he would be graciously pleased to listen to the humble prayer and advice of his faithful commons, that the war on the continent of North America might no longer be pursued, for the impracticable purpose of reducing that country to obedience by force." This was opposed in a long speech by Mr. Welbore Ellis, the new secretary for the American department, who declared, "that it

was now in contemplation to contract the scale of the war, and to prosecute hostilities by such means as were very dissimilar from the past. A striking change of circumstances had taken place, and these of course demanded a change of measures. The war now raging in America was not so properly a war against the colonies as with France. He wished to discard as inapplicable so vague a term as the American war. While the whole continental army was fed, clothed, and paid by France, it was not mere locality which ought to give a name to it. The war was a French war; and as in the late war America had been said to be conquered in Germany, so in this France must be conquered in America. A conquest of this nature would inevitably root out the *faction* now prevalent in that unhappy country. That this *faction*, however powerful, was *less numerous* than the party of the royalists, appeared from the most respectable authorities. However, at the present juncture, administration were conscious of the necessity of contracting the scale of war in America, and of drawing the operations of it into a narrow compass."

That this miserable mixture of falsehood and folly should fail to make impression upon the house cannot be deemed wonderful, and the ministry themselves seemed to despair of their cause, when they committed the defence of it to so contemptible an advocate;—whom Mr. Burke, in reply, over-

BOOK XXI. 1782.

whelmed with the supercilious and poignant disdain of his ridicule. "This war," Mr. Burke said, "had been most amazingly fertile in the growth of new statesmen; the right honorable gentleman was indeed an old member, but a young secretary. Having however studied at the feet of Gamaliel, he had entered into full possession of all the parliamentary qualifications by which his predecessor had been so conspicuously distinguished;—the same attachments, the same antipathies, the same extravagant delusions, the same wild phantoms of the brain, marked the right honorable gentleman as the true ministerial heir and residuary legatee of the noble viscount. And notwithstanding the metamorphosis he had recently undergone, he was so truly the same thing in the same place, that justly might it be said of him, '*alter et idem nascitur.*' Being of the caterpillar species, he had remained the destined time within the soft and silken folds of a lucrative employment, till, having burst his ligaments, he fluttered forth the butterfly minister of the day." On a division, however, the ministry had still a *majority*, but a fearful majority of ONE voice only! the numbers being 192 for, and 193 against, the motion; so that the pyramidal edifice of ministerial power seemed now, by a marvellous and magical inversion, to rest upon its apex.

Mr. Fox immediately gave notice, that in a few days the question would be revived under another

form. Accordingly, on the 27th of February, general Conway moved, "That it is the opinion of this house, that a further prosecution of offensive war against America would, under present circumstances, be the means of weakening the efforts of this country against her European enemies, and tend to increase the mutual enmity so fatal to the interests both of Great Britain and America." The general spoke with indignation of the objection urged against the last motion, that it was an unconstitutional interference in matters pertaining to the executive power. He said, it had been ever the custom of that house to interpose its advice whenever it thought proper, in all matters of peace and war, as their journals incontrovertibly proved.

BOOK XXI.

1782. Gen. Conway's second motion against the American war—carried by a majority of nineteen voices.

In order to evade an immediate determination upon the question, the attorney-general Wallace, in moving an adjournment, declared his intention speedily to submit to the consideration of the house "a bill, enabling his majesty to conclude a truce with America, and to enter into a negotiation on this ground." The proposition of adjournment was negatived by a majority of 19, the numbers being 234 to 215; and the original motion of general Conway was then carried without a division.

The general next moved an address to the king, founded on the precise words of the motion. This was agreed to; and it was resolved that the address

BOOK XXI. 1782.

should be presented to his majesty by the whole house; which was accordingly done on the 1st of March: and his majesty most graciously replied, "That, in pursuance of the advice of the house of commons, he would assuredly take such measures as should appear to him most conducive to the restoration of harmony between Great Britain and her *revolted* colonies."

This not being deemed by the now glorious majority of the house sufficiently explicit, general Conway on the 4th of March moved another address to his majesty, returning him thanks for his gracious assurances, and affirming, "That nothing could so essentially promote the great objects of his majesty's paternal care, as the measures his faithful commons had humbly though earnestly recommended to his majesty." This was agreed to NEM. CON. and by a second motion it was resolved, "That the house will consider as enemies to his majesty and the country all those who should advise a prosecution of offensive war on the continent of North America." The glory of general Conway, who had sixteen years before restored peace to the empire by the repeal of the Stamp Act, was now complete.

The minister giving notice of his intention to postpone for some days laying before the house the additional taxes, which were to pay the interest of the new loan of thirteen millions and a half, Mr. Burke

seized the occasion to observe, "that he lately had been taking a view of the blessed fruits of the noble lord's administration; and he had found we were already loaden with ten new taxes, viz. beer, wine, soap, leather, houses, coaches, post-chaises, post-horses, stamps, and servants. It was indeed no wonder that the minister should be at a loss about new taxes, for what fresh burdens could he add to this unhappy nation? We were already taxed if we rode, or if we walked; if we staid at home, or if we went abroad; if we were masters, or if we were servants. In the course of the noble lord's administration we had expended one hundred millions of money, and sacrificed one hundred thousand lives, and all this without producing in return the least benefit to the nation. On the contrary, the nation had been, in consequence of the wretched misconduct of the minister, deprived of thirteen colonies, to which might be added the loss of Senegal, Pensacola, Minorca, and some of our best West-India islands.

On the following day the attorney general moved for leave to bring in a bill to enable his majesty to conclude a truce or peace with the revolted colonies in America. Though no serious opposition was made to this bill, it was treated with much indifference; and Mr. Fox declared it to be deserving only of contempt. "Ministers had no wish," he

BOOK XXI. 1782.

said, "for peace, and affairs were so circumstanced, that they must lose their places or the country be undone. There were at that very time persons in Europe fully empowered to make peace between Great Britain and America, but who would not negotiate with such an administration. He, as a friend to his country, would, if properly authorized, conduct the transaction, even in the capacity of a *commis*; but he desired it to be understood that he did not mean to connect himself with any of the ministers. From the moment when he should make terms with any one of them, he would rest satisfied to be called the most infamous of mankind. He could not for an instant think of a coalition with men who in every public and private transaction, as ministers, had shown themselves void of every principle of honor and honesty. In the hands of such men he would not trust his honor even for a minute."

Successive motions of censure on the ministers.

Notwithstanding the late majorities in the house of commons in opposition to the ministers, they seemed to entertain no thoughts of resigning those offices which they had so long and so undeservedly enjoyed. It was therefore thought necessary to move a direct vote of censure upon them, at the close of a series of resolutions brought forward by lord John Cavendish on the 8th of March, importing, as the result of the whole, "that the chief cause

of all the national misfortunes is want of foresight and ability in his majesty's ministers." BOOK XXI. 1782.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Powys, who remarked, "that the noble lord at the head of affairs had declared, that whenever parliament should withdraw its confidence from him, he would resign. That period was now come. The confidence of parliament was now withdrawn. It was therefore necessary that he should retire from power; and, whenever the happy moment should arrive, in which the noble lord, to the unspeakable joy of the nation, should really go to his sovereign to resign his employments, he hoped he would not forget to lay before the king a fair representation of the flourishing state in which he found his majesty's empire when the government of it was intrusted to his hands, and the ruinous condition in which he was about to leave all that remained of it." After a long debate, the order of the day was moved, and, on a division, was carried by a majority of ten voices, the numbers being 226 to 216.

In a few days a resolution was moved by sir John Rous, member for Suffolk, a man once zealously attached to the present ministry, "that the house, taking into consideration the debt incurred and the losses sustained in the present war, could place no further confidence in the ministers who had the direction of public affairs." A vehement

BOOK XXI. 1782.

debate ensued, in the course of which a speech was made by sir James Marriot, judge of the court of admiralty, vindicatory of the ministry and of the war, which he asserted was just in its origin, however unfortunate in its consequences. "And though it had been *pretended*, that the inhabitants of America were not represented in parliament, the fact, he said, was certainly otherwise; for the grant and charter of the lands of the province of Virginia, with which the subsequent grants corresponded, were expressed in the following terms: 'To have and to hold of the king or queen's majesty, as part and parcel of the manor of East Greenwich in the county of Kent, *reddendum* a certain rent at our castle of East Greenwich, &c.' so that the interests of America were in truth, by the nature of their tenure, represented in parliament by the knights of the county of Kent." This astonishing *legal* discovery was received by the house with much less gravity than it was communicated by the learned judge, who seemed not to be at all aware, that no authority of law could give weight to folly, or respectability to nonsense. On the division, the numbers were 227 for, and 236 against, the motion. But with such a majority victory was defeat.

Entire change of administration.

Four days after this, March 19, the earl of Surry had proposed to move a resolution of similar import to that of sir John Rous. But when his lordship

was about to rise, lord North addressed himself to the speaker, and said, "that as he understood the object of the noble lord's motion to be the removal of ministers, he wished to prevent the necessity of giving the house further trouble by an explicit declaration, THAT HIS MAJESTY HAD COME TO A DETERMINATION TO MAKE AN ENTIRE CHANGE OF ADMINISTRATION: and he and his colleagues only retained their official situations till other ministers were appointed to occupy their places. His lordship thanked the house for the indulgence he had experienced from them in the discharge of his duty, and declared himself ready to answer to his country for his conduct whenever he should be called upon for that purpose." Lord Surry consented, not without reluctance, and by a lenity most pernicious in its consequences, upon this communication, to waive his motion, which, he declared, "was intended to prevent the further perpetration of those abuses of their trust, to which, with impunity, and to the disgrace and detriment of the state, the *late ministers* had for such a length of time proceeded." Thus was this famous, or, to use a term more characteristically appropriate, this infamous administration, so long the bane and curse of the British empire and of the world at large, suddenly and totally dissolved, to the inexpressible joy of all ranks and orders of people. It was however by many

BOOK XXI. 1782.

feared that great difficulty would arise in the formation of a new and efficient administration, on account of the unfortunate division which had long subsisted among the Whigs in opposition to the court. Of the two parties, that of lord Rockingham was by far the most numerous and powerful; but, from various causes easily and distinctly ascertainable by attentive observers, the other party, of which, since the death of lord Chatham, the earl of Shelburne was accounted the head, was in less disfavor with the king;—and the highest department of government was upon this occasion expressly offered to that nobleman by his majesty. For, not to descend to subordinate reasons of preference, it is evident that the chief of the inferior party, lord Shelburne, would, from his comparative weakness of connexion, have been more immediately and necessarily dependent than his competitor lord Rockingham upon the crown for protection and support. But the noble lord had the generosity and wisdom to resist the temptation; and the marquis of Rockingham, to the universal satisfaction of the kingdom, was a second time, in a manner the most honorable and flattering to his character and feelings, placed at the head of the treasury; under whom lord John Cavendish acted as chancellor of the exchequer; the earl of Shelburne and Mr. Fox were nominated secretaries of state; lord

Marquis of Rockingham a second time minister.

Camden was appointed president of the council; the duke of Grafton reinstated as lord privy-seal; admiral Keppel, now created lord Keppel, placed at the head of the admiralty; general Conway, of the army; the duke of Richmond, of the ordnance. The duke of Portland succeeded lord Carlisle as lord-lieutenant of Ireland; Mr. Burke was constituted paymaster of the forces; and colonel Barré, treasurer of the navy. Lord Thurlow alone, by the unaccountable and unmerited indulgence of the new ministers, continued in possession of the great seal. Whiggism was now once more triumphant. The Tories, though they escaped by a critical resignation the direct censure of the house of commons, had continued in office till they were reduced to the lowest extremity of shame, humiliation, and contempt; and a fair prospect, after a long night of storms and darkness, *seemed* to open, of a bright and brilliant day of national prosperity. BOOK XXI. 1782.

The first act of the new administration was to signify by a letter from Mr. Fox to M. Simolin, the Russian ambassador, his Britannic majesty's willingness to accept the mediation offered by the empress for a separate accommodation with Holland, on the basis of the treaty of 1674. But this their High Mightinesses thought proper to decline; and considering how much Holland was at this time in the power of his Most Christian majesty, whose

BOOK XXI. 1782.

troops were now in actual possession of the settlement of the Cape, and the island of Eustatius, a compliance was scarcely to be expected. On the contrary, Mr. Adams was at this period formally acknowledged and received by the States General as minister plenipotentiary from the United States of America. Negotiations for a general peace were almost immediately commenced between France and Great Britain, and Mr. Grenville was sent to Paris, invested with full powers to treat with all the parties at war.

Previous to the change of administration, sir Henry Clinton had resigned to sir Guy Carleton his command in America, which he had held since the resignation of sir William Howe in the spring of 1778, an interval of near four years, in all which time sir Henry had only taken one town and lost another; and the conquest of Charlestown, in the general estimate of subjugation, was fully counterbalanced by the evacuation of Newport and the other British posts in Rhode Island. Instructions were now sent to the new commander and admiral Digby, to acquaint the congress of the pacific views of the English court, and of their readiness to treat on the basis of American independence.

Bills formerly introduced, and negatived, were at a very early period after the appointment of the new minister revived by Mr. Crew and sir Philip

Jennings Clerke, for disabling revenue officers from voting at elections, and excluding contractors from the house of commons. These now passed with approbation and applause; Mr. Secretary Fox declaring, that not an hour should be lost in giving the public the strongest proofs that his majesty's ministers were sincerely determined to make such reforms as should be necessary, and to enforce that system of government which they had repeatedly called for when not in place. He said his worst suspicions of the negligence and scandalous mismanagement of the late ministers were now matured into knowledge; that, bad as things had been described, the representation was by no means so bad as the reality. And he should not think that the present ministers acted fairly or honestly by that house, or by the people at large, if they did not institute inquiries which might give the country a true and correct idea of the present situation of affairs.

BOOK XXI. 1782.

These bills were vehemently, though ineffectually, opposed in the house of peers by the lord-chancellor, who seemed to hang as a dead weight on the measures of the present administration, whose sentiments could never assimilate with those of men of liberal and comprehensive views, and who now appeared as the avowed and determined enemy of every species of civil or political reform. The attention

BOOK XXI. 1782.

of parliament was however soon occupied by affairs of much higher moment.

In the month of November last, Mr. Grattan, a distinguished member of the Irish parliament, had moved for a limitation of the perpetual Mutiny Bill. This was rejected by a great majority, extremely to the dissatisfaction of the people of that kingdom.

At a subsequent meeting of the representatives of one hundred and forty-three corps of volunteers assembled at Dungannon, RESOLUTIONS passed, DECLARATORY of the RIGHTS of IRELAND, and in express terms asserting, "that the claim of any body of men, other than the KING, LORDS, and COMMONS of IRELAND, to make laws to bind that kingdom, was unconstitutional and illegal, and a grievance of which it was their decided and unalterable determination to seek the speedy and effectual redress. They knew," they said, "their duty to their sovereign, and were *disposed* to be *loyal*; but they knew also what they owed to themselves, and were RESOLVED TO BE FREE."

High and peremptory claims of the Irish parliament.

In a very short time after these resolves passed, Mr. Grattan moved the house for an address to his majesty, consonant with, and founded upon, the same principles. This motion, after a long and warm debate, was also rejected. But, on the 16th of April, 1782, he again moved "a Declaration of Rights, under the form of an address to the

throne." In his speech on this occasion, he pronounced an animated panegyric on the volunteers, and the late conduct of the Irish nation—"He beheld," he said, "with joy and admiration, her progress from injuries to arms, from arms to liberty. The Irish volunteers had supported the rights of the Irish parliament against those temporizing trustees who would have relinquished them. Allied by liberty still more than by allegiance, Great Britain and Ireland formed a constitutional confederacy. The perpetual annexation of the two crowns was a powerful bond of union, but Magna Charta was more efficacious still. It would be easy any where to find a king, but to England only can we look for a constitution. Ireland was planted by Britons, and was entitled to British privileges. It was by charter, and not by conquest, as had been falsely asserted, that the mutual connexion of the two countries was originally established. Every true Irishman would say, Liberty with England, if England is so disposed; but at all events LIBERTY. The Irish nation were too high in pride, character, and power, to suffer any other nation to claim a right to make their laws. Was England ready to acknowledge the independency of America, and would she refuse liberty to Ireland? If she was capable, after enabling his majesty to repeal the Declaratory Act against America, of wishing to retain that against Ireland, the Irish nation was not capable of

BOOK XXI. 1782.

BOOK XXI. 1782.

submitting to it." Such was the spirit which now pervaded the kingdom, and such the resistless enthusiasm excited by the eloquence of Mr. Grattan, that the address was voted without a dissentient voice; and, being unanimously acceded to by the peers, was immediately transmitted to the king. In this famous address the two houses affirm, "That the crown of Ireland is an imperial crown, inseparably annexed to the crown of Great Britain, on which connexion the interest and happiness of both countries essentially depend: but that the kingdom of Ireland is a distinct kingdom, with a parliament of her own, the sole legislature thereof. In this right they conceived the very essence of their liberty to exist. It was a right which they, in behalf of all the people of Ireland, claimed as their birth-right, and which they could not yield but with their lives." They declared, "that they considered the claims of the parliament of Great Britain, in the act passed for better securing the dependency of Ireland, to be reconcileable to the fundamental rights of that nation." They added, "that they had a high veneration for the British character, and the people of Ireland did not desire to share the freedom of England without likewise sharing her fate;—and it was their determination to stand or fall with the British nation."

Happy indeed was it that a radical change of counsels had taken place in Britain before these high

and peremptory, though just and equitable, claims were preferred on the part of Ireland; for the folly, obstinacy, and pride, of the late ministers would scarcely have scrupled to involve the empire in a second civil war, rather than have conceded in points which militated so strongly against what they would undoubtedly have styled "the honor and dignity of the crown, and the essential interests of the people."

Some days previous to the motion of Mr. Grattan, a royal message was delivered to the house of commons by the secretary of state, "recommending to their most serious consideration the state of affairs in Ireland, in order to such a final adjustment as may give a mutual satisfaction to both kingdoms." And on the 18th of May, Mr. Fox, at the close of a long and able speech, moved for the repeal of the obnoxious act for securing the dependency of Ireland; which he called "a measure of necessity, resulting, however unpleasant it might be to some, from the conduct of the late ministry, who had awakened the present spirit in Ireland, by refusing their most modest and reasonable requests. With that generosity and openness of sentiment by which this eminent statesman has been so long and so remarkably distinguished, Mr. Fox observed nevertheless "that his own decided opinion had always been, that Ireland, being a part of the British empire, was entitled

Repeal of the Irish declaratory act.

BOOK XXI. 1782.

to the full and equal participation of all the benefits and immunities enjoyed in England, and which were consonant to the principles of the British constitution. His ideas of Ireland corresponded (he said) exactly with his ideas relative to America. He thought it absurd and unjust for any country to pretend to legislate for another, without, much less against, their consent and concurrence;—nor could it at any time so legislate to any good purpose. As to Ireland, he made no scruple, in the most express and unequivocal terms, to declare, that he considered her present claims to be substantially just, and that he felt himself inclined to move the resolution which he was about to propose in favor of Ireland, as much on the ground of justice as prudence." This repeal, which passed both houses without opposition, was considered in both countries as a virtual renunciation of the claim of legislating for Ireland. And so highly gratified were the Irish parliament and nation with the liberality of these concessions, that a vote of the house of commons in that kingdom passed unanimously for raising twenty thousand seamen for the service of the British navy.

On the 15th of April another message was delivered to the house by Mr. Fox from the king, stating, "That his majesty, taking into consideration the supplies which have been given with so much liberality, and supported with such uncommon firm-

ness and fortitude by his people in the present extensive war, recommended to his faithful commons the consideration of an effectual plan of œconomy throughout all the branches of the public expenditure." An address of thanks was then moved for, and immediately agreed to by the house; at the close of which it was said, "That a king of Great Britain cannot have so perfect or so honorable a security for every thing which can make a king truly great or truly happy, as in the genuine and natural support of an uninfluenced and independent house of commons." This was language novel and highly pleasing to the respectable part of the public, who had been so long nauseated by the fulsome adulation of the addresses presented of late years to the throne, so contrary to the spirit of freedom, which requires the representatives of the people to respect the majesty of the people, and to use language consonant to the high and dignified situation in which they themselves are placed.

Mr. Burke's reform bill a third time introduced and passed.

In consequence of this message, Mr. Burke's Reform Bill, which appeared to have itself undergone much retrenchment and reform since its first introduction to the house, was a third time brought forward, under far more favorable auspices than before. By this bill, which now passed the house with little difficulty, the board of trade, and the board of works, with the great wardrobe, were

BOOK XXI. 1782.

abolished; together with the office of American secretary of state, now rendered useless by the loss of the American colonies;—the offices of treasurer of the chamber, cofferer of the household, the lords of police in Scotland, the paymaster of the pensions, the master of the harriers, the master of the stag-hounds, and six clerks of the board of green-cloth. But the regulations relative to the principality of Wales, to the duchies of Cornwall and Lancaster, the mint, and ordnance offices, with other provisions contained in the former bill, were wholly omitted. By a clause of the present bill his majesty was enabled to *borrow* a sum for the liquidation of a new arrear of three hundred thousand pounds, by a tax on salaries and pensions; for a debt to this amount had been again contracted by the shameful prodigality of the late ministers, notwithstanding the addition of one hundred thousand pounds per annum so recently made to the civil list. In the course of the speech made by Mr. Burke on the revival of this popular measure, the style of this gentleman's oratory was observed to be marvellously changed. Already had this lofty and intrepid patriot become a complete adept in the *precious jargon* current within the verge and purlieus of a court. Mr. Burke "congratulated the house and the kingdom on the happy æra when his majesty, freed from that secret and inju-

King's debts a third time discharged.

Courtly adulation of Mr. Burke.

rious council which stood between him and his people, now spake to them in the pure and rich benevolence of his own heart. The message which they had just heard was the genuine effusion of his majesty's paternal care and tenderness of his subjects. It was what good subjects deserved from a good king: and every man would rejoice and bless the day when his majesty, restored to the dignified independence of his elevated situation, was able to speak to his people in the language of his own heart, to participate in their sufferings, to praise and reward them for their fortitude. It was the best of messages, to the best of people, from the BEST of KINGS."

The œconomical abolitions and retrenchments of the Reform Bill met with a violent opposition in the upper house, from the lords Thurlow and Loughborough; but it finally passed by a great majority. A bill sent up from the commons, for disfranchising certain voters of the borough of Cricklade, who had been proved guilty of the most shameful and scandalous acts of bribery, was also impeded and embarrassed in all its stages by the same law lords, with every possible subtilty of legal quibble and chicanery. The duke of Richmond was upon this occasion provoked to charge the chancellor with indiscriminately opposing every measure of regulation and improvement which was

BOOK XXI. 1782.

laid before the house. And lord Fortescue, with all the warmth of aristocratic disdain, remarked, "that what he had long feared was at length come to pass;—from the profusion of lawyers introduced into that house, it was no longer a house of lords, it was converted into a mere court of law, where all the solid and honorable principles of truth and justice were sacrificed to the low and miserable chicanery used in Westminster Hall. That once venerable, dignified, and august assembly now resembled more a meeting of pettifoggers than a house of parliament. With respect to the learned lord on the woolsack, who had now for some years presided in that house, he seemed to be fraught with nothing but contradictions and distinctions and law subtilties. As to himself," lord Fortescue with a noble pride added, "he had not attended a minister's levee, till very lately, for these forty years; and the present ministry he would support no longer than they deserved it. But as they came into office upon the most honorable and laudable of all principles, the approbation of their sovereign, and the esteem and confidence of the nation, it filled his breast with indignation when he beheld their measures day after day thwarted and opposed, by men who resembled more a set of Cornish attorneys than members of that right honorable house."

1782.

On the 3d of May, after a debate of some length, it was resolved by the house of commons, "That all the declarations, orders, and resolutions of that house respecting the election of John Wilkes, esq. be expunged from the journals of the house, as subversive of the rights of the whole body of electors in the kingdom." Mr. Wilkes, in a public letter addressed to his constituents, "congratulated them on the signal reparation they had now obtained for their violated franchises, and the injuries they had sustained under the former flagitious administration. But on this point the feelings of the public were no longer in unison with those of Mr. Wilkes. The vote by which those resolutions were rescinded, which had thirteen years before thrown the whole nation into a flame, was scarcely noticed; and the case of the Middlesex election was now regarded with nearly as much indifference as that of any other elective decision.

Resolutions respecting the Middlesex election rescinded.

In the same month a subject of infinitely higher importance, and of a nature truly and permanently interesting, was brought under the immediate cognizance of the house, in consequence of a motion made by Mr. Pitt for the appointment of a committee to inquire into the state of the representation of the people in parliament. It is remarkable, that, notwithstanding the prodigious and glaring inequality of the national system of representation as now constituted, the idea of a parliamentary reform

Mr Pitt's motion of inquiry into the state of the representation.

BOOK XXI. 1782.

may be considered in great measure as a novelty in politics. The patriots of elder days, sensible of the dangers arising from the rapid and enormous increase of the regal influence, strongly and repeatedly urged the remedial measures of triennial parliaments, of civil and military reductions, of place and pension bills; but it was a species of merit reserved for the present times to strike at the root of the evil, by an effort to extend and equalize that popular representation, on the purity and integrity of which the national prosperity and welfare so essentially depend.

The evils attending this defective and corrupt state of the representation had at no former period of our history been so flagrantly apparent as in the present reign; and it was with grief and indignation that the intelligent and independent part of the public saw the house of commons degenerate into an assembly apparently possessing neither will, nor power, nor wisdom, but what they derived from the permission and *fiat* of the minister, who also frequently appeared himself the sport of some capricious and invisible agent. The affair of the Middlesex election, otherwise comparatively unimportant, wore in this view a most alarming aspect, as it shewed how far the house would venture to carry their complaisance to the crown in opposition to the decided, unanimous, and persevering reance of the people. "The virtue, spirit, and

essence of a house of commons," says Mr. Burke in his famous political tract published at that period *, "consists in its being the express image of the feelings of the nation. An addressing house of commons and a petitioning nation—a house of commons full of confidence when the nation is plunged in despair, who vote thanks when the nation calls upon them for impeachments, who are eager to grant when the general voice demands account, who in all disputes between the people and administration presume against the people, who punish their disorders, but refuse to inquire into the provocations to them,—this is an unnatural, a monstrous state of things in this constitution. Such an assembly is not to any popular purpose a House of COMMONS."

The obstinate prosecution of the American war, and the contemptuous dismission of the petitions for a reform in the public expenditure, afforded still more recent and striking instances of obsequious and unlimited devotion on the part of the national representatives to the executive power, and their total disregard of the sentiments of their constituents. So struck was the late earl of Chatham with the obvious and manifold mischiefs arising from the present incongruous system, that he scrupled not to hazard a peremptory prediction, "that the *rotten boroughs* would not survive the

* Thoughts on the Causes of the present Discontents.

BOOK XXI. 1782.

present century—and that, if parliament did not reform itself from WITHIN, it would be reformed with a VENGEANCE from WITHOUT." Nevertheless it must be acknowledged there were not wanting many wise and excellent persons, true and firm friends to liberty, whose minds forcibly revolted at the novelty and boldness of the idea of *new-modelling* the representation of the country. They conceived the actual advantages resulting from the constitution, when *rightly administered*, under the present form, too great to risk any experiment, however plausible in theory, of such magnitude as to draw after it consequences which no human sagacity could pretend to trace or fathom.

Totally to annihilate the influence of the crown in the house of commons would give such an ascendency to the republican part of the constitution, that the prerogative of the monarch would in a short time be reduced to as low an ebb as the authority of a king of Poland or a doge of Venice; the executive power would lose its weight and energy, and the state would be torn with the opposite and equal claims of hostile and contending factions. To ascertain the precise degree of influence which the monarch ought to possess, was indeed confessed to be a difficult problem to solve. It is the radical and remediless defect of the British form of government, in other respects so admirable, that too much depends on the personal character of the sovereign; and under the reign of a

weak, obstinate, and bigoted prince, intoxicated with the pomp and pride of royalty, such as imagination can easily feign, the excellence of that celebrated constitution may be put to a very severe test indeed—particularly if, by an accidental concurrence of circumstances, such a monarch, thus palpably unfit to govern, should rise to high and unexpected popularity.

On the other hand, it may doubtless happen that the executive power may possess juster and more enlightened views of policy than the nation at large; and a more popular system of representation would in such circumstances be a real and serious evil. This was remarkably the case in the reigns of king William and king George I., who exerted with very incomplete success their utmost influence to extend and enlarge the general system of liberty. The grand object of every constitution of government which aspires on rational grounds to political perfection is not, as the wild and visionary speculatists of modern times absurdly suppose, to carry the will of the majority at all events into effect, but to concentrate the wisdom, the knowledge, and the virtue of the community—to endow them with influence, and arm them with power. Above all, it excited the alarm of the moderate, the judicious, and truly enlightened, that a great proportion, perhaps a majority, of the advocates for a parliamentary reform maintained the existence of certain

BOOK XXI. 1782.

abstract rights independent of utility—which is in truth the basis both of right and obligation—in conformity to which the people had a clear, original, and imprescriptible claim to the privilege of UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE, without the exercise of which it was pretended that no liberty could exist.

The duke of Richmond, who had signalized himself as a public and zealous patron of this scheme, expressly says, in his famous letter to colonel Sharman, chairman of the military convention at Dungannon, "that all plans of a palliative nature have been found insufficient to interest and animate the great body of the people, from whose earnestness alone any reform can be expected. The truth," says his grace, "is, that the people have been so often deceived that they will now scarcely trust any set of men, and nothing but self-evident conviction that a measure tends effectually to the RECOVERY of their RIGHTS can or indeed ought to interest them in its favor." To this new species of *divine right*, therefore, all the inferior and vulgar considerations of public good, of public order, of peace, happiness, and rational subordination, must bow with reverential awe; but it is evident that this inherent right of suffrage cannot exist alone. It necessarily involves in it a right to command, countermand, and dismiss, their representatives at pleasure. If the people have an inherent abstract right to elect, then the exercise of

this right must be determined by the same abstract rules of political justice—and an equal number of electors must return an equal number of representatives; in other words, population is the sole basis of representation.—If therefore the metropolis be supposed to contain one-sixth of the entire population of the kingdom, and the representative body to consist of six hundred individuals, London might on this abstract metaphysical hypothesis plead an inherent indefeasible right to send one hundred members to parliament. Other large and populous towns possessing a similar right to elect in the same proportion, a combination of local and particular interests would be formed, totally incompatible with the general interests of the community. But where shall we stop? or how shall the monarchical or aristocratical parts of our constitution be maintained against these sovereign and indefeasible rights—these paramount and transcendent claims?

All these gross and dangerous absurdities, involving in them the most alarming consequences, proceed from the fatal error of confounding the power of the people with the liberty of the people. To liberty they have a right, so far as it is promotive of happiness; and to power, so far, and so far only, as it is a security to liberty. For, to the blind, capricious, and self-destructive will even of the majority, it is ever lawful—nay more, it is in the highest degree laudable—it is indeed the purest

BOOK XXI. 1782.

and noblest act of virtue—at the greatest personal risk to oppose the dictates of reason, equity, and justice. Allowing, however, the full force of these general arguments, it could not be denied that the influence of the crown, first systematically employed as an engine of government by sir Robert Walpole, had in this reign extended itself far beyond all its antient bounds and limits. Under that justly celebrated minister, also, this influence, however corruptly obtained, was *upon the whole* employed wisely and well: but since the commencement of the NEW SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT, which was in fact no other than the old Tory system revived and varnished, it had been perverted to the most vile and pernicious purposes *. It was no wonder, therefore, that a measure which was regarded as alone adequate to the effectual reduction of this influence should be pursued with zeal and ardor.

Early in the present year it was resolved by the city of London, assembled in common-hall, "That the unequal representation of the people, the corrupt state of parliament, and the perversion thereof from its original institution, had been the principal

* Sir Robert Walpole was accustomed to say, "that he was under the necessity of bribing men to act not against, but according to, their consciences." And, allowing largely for the latitude of the expression, this apology must be admitted as in a great degree founded in truth.

causes of the unjust war with America, and of every grievance of which the nation complained." Similar resolutions were passed by the county of York, and many other counties and cities; and after so long and bitter an experience of the evils arising from the present defective state of the representation, it would indeed have argued not so much a wise and well-weighed caution, as a reproachful excess of political timidity in the nation, to have hesitated in applying the most permanent and efficacious remedy. "We have been told with peculiar emphasis," says an animated writer, "that what seems excellent in theory is absurd in practice. From the frequent repetition of this maxim, and the manner in which it is applied, one would almost suspect that the meaning is, to recommend as an axiom, To avoid every new measure which, to our feeble and circumscribed understandings, seems likely to produce a good effect *."

1782.

The motion of Mr. Pitt, though eloquently enforced by the mover, and supported by Mr. Fox with a great display of discrimination and judgment, was rejected, notwithstanding its present popularity, on a division, by a majority of 161 to 141 voices.

In the course of the last session, the affairs of the East India Company had been the frequent sub-

* Moore's View of the Causes of the French Revolution.

BOOK XXI. 1782.

ject of parliamentary discussion. And on the 19th of April of the present year the lord advocate of Scotland, Mr. Dundas, moved, "that the several reports which had been made from the secret committee, appointed in the last and present session of parliament, relating to the affairs of the East India Company, should be referred to the consideration of a committee of the whole house." On this occasion the lord advocate, as chairman of the secret committee, entered into a long and able detail of the causes of those great calamities which had brought the company into its present critical and dangerous state; taking a retrospective view of Indian transactions from the memorable æra of 1765, when lord Clive went out a second time governor.

On the arrival of that nobleman in Bengal, he found the British possessions to consist not only of that kingdom and of the adjoining provinces of Bahar and Orissa, but also of the country of Sujah ul Dowla, the nabob of Oude, acquired by recent conquest. So far, however, was lord Clive from being of opinion that it was good policy to retain so extensive a territory, that he by a free and voluntary act put Sujah Dowla again into possession of his dominions. Happy would it have been for this country had that policy been adhered to; and that, diligently endeavouring to cultivate the friendship of the native princes, we had continued to act

defensively only; instead of carrying on offensive operations with a view to conquest. There were four principal powers in India whose territories bordered upon ours—the Mahratta states, the dominions of Hyder Ally, those of the nizam of the Decan, and the rajah of Berar. As to Hyder Ally, it was well known that we were now at war with that enterprising and formidable prince. The nizam of the Decan, though not an open enemy, we could never place any confidence in as a friend. Such had been our conduct towards that potentate, and such his resentment of it, that he had affirmed the English to be a nation whom no promises could bind, nor any rules of justice, honor, or faith restrain. We were likewise in a state of hostility with the Mahrattas. The presidency of Bombay had entered into a negotiation with Ragoba, a person pretending to the sovereignty of the Mahratta states, promising to fix him in the government if he would give up certain territories to the Company. With this treaty they entered upon the war; and soon after the presidency of Bengal made overtures of exactly the same kind to Moodajee Boosla, the rajah of Berar, offering to seat him in the government of the Mahrattas, if he would cede certain districts. This double dealing was discovered; and Moodajee Boosla resented it as insidious and unfaithful. Such indeed was the miserable issue of our guilty conduct, that we were reduced

BOOK XXI. 1782.

BOOK XXI. 1782.

to the necessity of humbling ourselves before those powers whom we had offended, and of negotiating for peace through the medium of the potentates thus insulted and injured.

In remarking upon the state of the Company's finances, he affirmed, that the revenue of Bombay fell short of its necessary civil and military investments 200,000*l.* annually, which was always drawn from Bengal. The revenue of the Madras presidency was in time of peace more than equal to defray the cost of that establishment. But the most lucrative of the British possessions in the East Indies were those of Bengal. Such, however, had been the enormous expense of the Mahratta war, that the governor-general had been obliged to contract so large a debt, that it was doubtful whether the investments for England must be wholly or partially suspended. And the lord advocate observed, that Mr. Hastings had no right whatever to fancy himself an Alexander, or an Aurengzebe, and to prefer frantic military exploits to the improvement of the trade and commerce of the country.

The motion of the lord advocate being agreed to by the house, on the following day general Smith, chairman of the select committee, moved, "that the reports of that committee should also be referred to a committee of the whole house." The general strongly corroborated the opinions and sentiments of Mr. Dundas, and joined him in affirming, that

there had been a variety of great abuses in India, the particulars of which might be seen in the reports. He also took notice that sir Elijah Impey, his majesty's chief justice in India, had so far derogated from the character of a judge as to accept a place from the East India Company, which placed him under their control, and consequently deprived him of that independence which ought to constitute the character of a judge. If in England, where we enjoyed the blessing of trials by jury, and the duty of a judge was nothing more than to explain points of law, it was thought necessary for that judge to be independent, how much more was it necessary to a judge having the sole management of all affairs of law and justice! The fact indeed was, that justice had been most grossly perverted in India: but parliament, it was hoped, was competent to redress those grievances, and to punish the offenders.

This proposition being agreed to, the house resolved, on the 24th of April, on the motion also of general Smith, "That Warren Hastings, esq. governor-general of Bengal, and sir Elijah Impey, knight, chief justice of the Supreme Court of Fort William in Bengal, appeared to have been concerned, the one in giving, the other in receiving, an office not agreeable to the true intent of the act of the 13th year of his present majesty, &c.; which

BOOK XXI. 1782.

unjustifiable transaction between them was attended with circumstances of evil tendency and example."

It was also resolved, "That the powers given to the governor-general and council of Bengal, by the above-mentioned act, ought to be more distinctly ascertained; and that it would be proper to reduce into one act the several acts of parliament made to regulate the East India Company, and further to explain and amend the same; and also to make new regulations and provisions to the same end."

On the 28th of May the house of commons came to a variety of very laudable resolutions, grounded on the reports of the secret and select committees; among which the following were most remarkable:

"That the orders of the Court of Directors of the East India Company, which have conveyed to their servants abroad a prohibitory condemnation of all schemes of conquest and enlargement of dominion, by prescribing certain rules and boundaries for the operation of their military force, and enjoining a strict adherence to a system of defence upon the principles of the treaty of Illahabad, were founded no less in wisdom and justice than in justice and moderation."

"That every transgression of those orders, without evident necessity, by any of the several British governments in India, has been highly reprehensible,

and has tended in a chief degree to weaken the force and influence, and to diminish the resources, of the Company in those parts." BOOK XXI. 1782.

"That every interference as a party in the domestic or national quarrels of the country powers, and all new engagements with them in offensive alliance, have been wisely and providently forbidden by the Company in their commands to their administrations in India."

"That every unnecessary and avoidable deviation from those well-advised rules should be followed with very severe reprehension and punishment for it, as an instance of wilful disobedience of orders, and as tending to disturb and destroy that state of tranquillity and peace with all their neighbours, the preservation of which has been recommended as the first principle of policy to the British governments in India."

"That the maintenance of an inviolable character for moderation, good faith, and scrupulous regard to treaty, ought to have been the simple grounds on which the British governments should have endeavoured to establish an influence superior to that of other Europeans, over the minds of the native powers in India. And that the danger and discredit arising from the forfeiture of this pre-eminence could not be compensated by the temporary success of any plan of violence or injustice."

BOOK XXI. 1768

"That the conduct of the Company and their servants in India to the KING and Nudjiff Khan, with respect to the tribute payable to the one, and the stipend to the other; and with respect to the transfer of the provinces of Corah and Illahabad to the vizier, was contrary to policy and good faith: and that such wise and practicable measures should be adopted in future as may tend to redeem the national honor, and recover the confidence and attachment of the princes of India."

"That the Company's servants in their presidency of Bombay were guilty of very notorious instances of disobedience to the orders of their employers, as well in the proceedings against the nabob of Baroche, as in the commencement of the Mahratta war, by the seizure of the islands of Salsette and Coranja."

"That in forming an offensive alliance with Ragoba, the government of Bombay violated the orders of the Company against any connexions of that nature, and against any interference in the quarrels of the native powers."

"That it is the opinion of this house, that the motives, as well as success, of the Nizam's instigations to form and animate a confederacy of the great country powers against the British possessions in India, and the calamitous events which ensued, may be properly attributed both to the unjustifiable proceedings against the Mahratta government, and

to the conduct of the Madras presidency, in regard to the Peshcush, and Guntoor Circar." BOOK XXI. 1782.

As the result of the whole connected series of resolutions, it was finally resolved:

"That Warren Hastings, esq. governor-general in Bengal, and William Hornby, esq. president of the council at Bombay, having in sundry instances acted in a manner repugnant to the honor and policy of this nation, and thereby brought great calamities on India, and enormous expenses on the East India Company, it is the duty of the directors of the said Company to pursue all legal and effectual means for the removal of the said governor-general and president from their said offices, and to recall them to Great Britain."

But if all the preceding resolutions were founded, as they indubitably appeared to be, on the basis of truth and justice, the concluding one merits only contempt, as wholly inefficacious and inadequate to the object in view. The purport of it was indeed approved and confirmed by the Court of Directors, who, on the 28th of October of this year, passed the following analogous resolution:

"Resolved, That it is the opinion of this court, that a steady perseverance in the system of conduct so frequently enjoined by the court of directors, cannot be expected from those servants whose ideas of extension of dominion, either by negotia-

BOOK XXI. 1782.

tion or conquest, have led them to depart from orders so often enforced; and THEREFORE that it is expedient to remove Warren Hastings, esq. from the office of governor-general of Bengal."

But this resolution it was necessary, according to the constitution of the Company, adapted merely to the transaction of mercantile affairs, to submit to the ultimate discussion of the court of proprietors; who refusing by a great majority to ratify the same, the whole proceeding passed gradually and silently into oblivion: and the decisions of the representatives of the nation, in a political concern of the highest moment, were counteracted and finally superseded by the prejudiced, not to say factious, determination of a body of ignorant and interested traders.

Hitherto the new ministry, although composed of dissonant and jarring materials, had conducted public affairs with at least the appearance of perfect and cordial unanimity—the earl of Shelburne in the upper house bringing forward the same motions, and supporting them by the same general arguments, as Mr. Fox in the lower. But an event now took place which was the subject of deep and universal regret, and the consequences of which cannot be sufficiently deplored, in the death of the marquis of Rockingham, July 1st, 1782, in the meridian of his age, and at the very height of his poli-

Death of the marquis of Rockingham.

tical reputation—the weight and influence attached to which, the result of a steady and uniform adherence to the principles of liberty under every vicissitude of fortune, combined with the excellence of his private character, and the mild benignity of his manners, formed that power of attraction which held together the whole ministerial system; and when this ceased to operate, disorder, confusion, and mutual repulsion took place. The splendor of the new constellation faded, and "certain stars shot *madly* from their spheres."

BOOK XXI. 1782. His character.

To drop all metaphorical and poetical allusion, it is necessary to state in plain language, that, on the very day succeeding the decease of the marquis of Rockingham, the earl of Shelburne was declared first lord commissioner of the treasury. The acceptance of this high and pre-eminent office, without any previous communication with his colleagues in administration, was considered by the Rockingham party as equivalent to a declaration of political hostility on the part of lord Shelburne. It was in effect telling his allies that he conceived his influence in the cabinet to be sufficiently strong to enable him to stand without their assistance. It was evidently setting up a distinct and opposite interest, depending upon the secret assurances of royal favor and support. Precisely the same reasons which had induced the earl of Shelburne three months before to decline the offer then made still existed in full

Advancement of the earl of Shelburne.

BOOK XXI. 1782.

force; but he was no longer proof against temptation—though the experience of his illustrious friend lord Chatham might have convinced him on how precarious a ground those ministers stood who depended on courtly promises and professions for protection and safety.

Fatal divisions among the Whigs.

On this promotion, Mr. Fox resigned the seals as secretary of the northern department; lord John Cavendish his office as chancellor of the exchequer; the duke of Portland his government of Ireland; lord Althrop, lord Duncannon, Mr. Frederic Montague, &c. their seats at the boards of treasury and admiralty; and Mr. Burke his post of paymaster of the army. In consequence of these resignations and removes, the seals of the southern department were given to the earl of Grantham, and of the northern to Mr. Thomas Townshend, late secretary at war; sir George Yonge succeeded Mr. Townshend; colonel Barré was made paymaster of the forces; and the lord advocate of Scotland, in his room, treasurer of the navy. The earl of Temple, eldest son of the late George Grenville, succeeded the duke of Portland in the lord-lieutenancy of Ireland: but the promotion which attracted most of the public attention was that of Mr. William Pitt, who, at the age of three-and-twenty, was constituted chancellor of the exchequer—an office which had been always supposed to require, in order to its proper discharge, not so much brilliancy of talents,

as long previous study and experience, and confirmed habitudes of diligence and industry.

It was evident from several of the late promotions that a mixture of the *old leaven* was again ominously introduced into the present *Whig Administration*, to which, notwithstanding the late secession, the names of lord Camden, general Conway, the dukes of Grafton and Richmond, lord Keppel, and others, gave great respectability—*exclusive* of the new premier himself, whose public conduct had been uniformly consistent and meritorious, who had never deviated in any instance from the principles of genuine Whiggism, whose political knowledge was extensive, whose abilities were unquestionable, and whose general rectitude of intention the public had no just ground to doubt. The only charge brought against the minister, which seemed to make any considerable impression, was that which accused him of the habitual and systematic practice of a certain duplicity and *finesse*, which entirely precluded all open, ingenuous, and confidential intercourse.

In a few days subsequent to his resignation, Mr. Fox stated in the house of commons the grounds and reasons of his conduct. He said, "that political differences of opinion had taken place of great importance in the cabinet, and that he had withdrawn himself from it to prevent that distraction in the public councils which he conceived to be ruin-

BOOK XXI. 1782.

ous to the public welfare. He had reason, he affirmed, to believe that the day was come when the system on which the administration of lord Rockingham had been formed was to be abandoned, and a new system was to be substituted, or rather the old one revived, with the assistance of the *old men*, or indeed of any men that could be found. Nor should he wonder if in a short time they were joined by those very persons whom that house had precipitated from their seats. He therefore chose to resign, voluntarily relinquishing the pomps, the profits, and the patronage of office, as he could no longer continue in place with honor to himself, or benefit to the public."

General Conway, in reply, "lamented the defection of the distinguished characters who had recently withdrawn themselves from office, at a time when their country so much needed their support. He protested that he knew of no defalcation in the present ministers from those principles which they had originally professed; nor any diversities of opinion in the cabinet, beyond those *shades of difference* which must always arise amongst men of strong and independent minds."

On the following day the duke of Richmond expressed in the house of lords similar regret at the late resignations. "So long, and so long only, as the noble lord who now presided at the board of trea-

sury should adhere to the principles on which the administration was originally formed, so long would he give him his cordial support. Whenever these principles were abandoned, he would be his most determined opponent." BOOK XXI. 1782.

The earl of Shelburne now rose to declare "his perfect satisfaction at being supported upon the terms stated by the noble duke." He said, "he lamented as much as any man the death of the late marquis of Rockingham, and the loss sustained by the cabinet in the retreat of two persons so remarkably distinguished, one by the splendor of his abilities, the other by the unimpeached integrity of his character. The office he now held, his lordship affirmed, was within his grasp when the first arrangements were forming, but he had then given way to the noble marquis, though he had now accepted the post, as that nobleman was no more; and this, he believed, was the only reason for which the late right honorable secretary had withdrawn himself. But if the monarch was divested of the power of appointing his own *servants*, he would be reduced to the condition of a king of the Mahrattas, who had nothing of sovereignty but the name. He had been charged, his lordship said, with inconsistency relative to America: but his opinion still was, as it ever had been, that whenever the parliament of Great Britain acknowledged that point, the sun of England's glory was set for ever. Other

BOOK XXI. 1782.

lords, however, thought differently, and the question would soon come under the full and impartial discussion of parliament; but he repeated, that if parliament conceded that point, he foresaw that England was undone; for that ruin and independence were linked together—the ruin not of England only, but of America."

It was sufficiently evident from this speech, that more than "shades of difference" had existed in the cabinet previous to the resignation of Mr. Fox. But it excited the utmost astonishment in America, that such language as this should be held in parliament by the first minister, after sir Guy Carleton had been two months before expressly authorised to declare to the congress, "that his majesty, in order to remove all obstacles to peace, had commissioned Mr. Grenville to propose the independency of the Thirteen Provinces in the first instance, instead of making it a condition of a general treaty:" and the discordant language held on the different sides of the Atlantic was indignantly cited as a new instance of British artifice and perfidy. As to the *right* of the king to appoint his own ministers, on which lord Shelburne laid so great stress, it was entirely remote from the point in question, which regarded merely the wisdom and patriotism of his lordship's eager acceptance of an offer, which was evidently calculated to destroy all confidence, and to gratify the aspiring views of a favored indi-

vidual, to the extreme eventual detriment of the public.

Had the earl of Shelburne acted with openness and candor in the critical circumstances in which he was placed, there is good ground to believe that his highest ambition might have been gratified, a sincere and cordial union of parties formed, and a firm, efficient, and patriotic administration ultimately established, uncontaminated with the detestable leaven of TORYISM.

On the 11th of July, 1782, the session terminated, and the speech from the throne contained the welcome declaration, "that nothing could be more repugnant to his majesty's feelings than the long continuance of so complicated a war; and that his ardent desire of peace had induced him to take every measure which promised the speediest accomplishment of his wishes."

The military events of the year yet remain to be narrated. The fortress of Gibraltar still continued closely invested by the Spaniards, and the resolute defence of the garrison began to attract the general attention of Europe. Towards the close of the preceding year, 1781, by a most spirited and successful *sortie*, the stupendous works erected by the Spaniards across the isthmus which connects the rock of Gibraltar with the continent were stormed and almost totally demolished, when, after immense

BOOK XXI. 1782.

expence and labor, they were arrived at the highest state of perfection. In less than half an hour, five batteries, with all the lines of approach, communication, and traverse, were in flames—the magazines blowing up one after another, as the conflagration successively reached them—the astonished Spaniards offering no other resistance, than a distant and ill-directed fire from the forts of St. Philip and St. Barbara.

Minorca conquered by the Spaniards.

To balance this success, intelligence arrived early in the spring of the new year, that general Murray, governor of Minorca, had been compelled, after a long and vigorous resistance, to surrender that island to the arms of his Catholic majesty. Formerly the loss of Minorca had occasioned the downfall of an administration; but such were the infinitely greater misfortunes and disasters of the present war, that this event made little impression upon the public, and it was scarcely remarked, that no attempt whatever had been made for its relief during a siege of one hundred and seventy-one days.

Island of St. Christopher &c. captured by the French.

The island of Nevis, in the West Indies, also about the same time surrendered to the marquis de Bouillé and the count de Grasse; by whom the most liberal terms were granted to the inhabitants. Eight thousand troops, with a formidable train of artillery, were then landed on the important island

of St. Christopher. Sir Samuel Hood, who now commanded the British fleet in the West Indies, made strenuous efforts for its relief: and, notwithstanding his disparity of force, in three successive encounters with the count de Grasse he obtained each time the advantage, and at length, by a dexterous manœuvre, gained possession of the enemy's anchorage at Basseterre Road. Admiral Hood then landed a considerable detachment of troops from Antigua under general Prescot; but general Frazer, the commanding officer on the island, who was strongly posted on an intrenched eminence, sent him word, "that as he had taken the trouble to come with troops to his assistance, he should doubtless be glad of the honor of seeing him, but he was in no want of him or his troops." Notwithstanding this idle vaunt, he was obliged to surrender the island on capitulation, after a siege of five weeks, on the 12th of February 1782. BOOK XXI. 1782.

In the same month Demerary and Isequibo were captured by the French: also the island of Montserrat. The loss of the Bahamas quickly followed, being reduced by a considerable force under don Manuel de Cigagal, governor of the Havannah, to the obedience of the crown of Spain. The Bahamas taken by the Spaniards.

On the 19th of February sir George Rodney arrived in the West Indies with a strong reinforcement of ships from England, and resumed the command of the fleet. Mighty preparations were now

BOOK XXI. 1782.

making, both by the French and Spaniards, for the invasion of Jamaica; and, as the combined force of these powerful nations amounted to above sixty sail of the line, had a junction been effected, the island was irrecoverably lost. The first object of the British admiral was to intercept a great convoy of troops, provisions, and stores, expected from Europe: but in this he was disappointed; the enemy found means to escape his vigilance, by making the island of Desecada, to the northward, and keeping close in shore under the high land of Guadaloupe and Dominique, and arrived safe at Fort Royal on the 21st of March. It was the design of count de Grasse to proceed to Hispaniola, and join the Spanish admiral, don Solano, who was waiting his arrival, in order to make, in conjunction, the pre-concerted attack on Jamaica.

Decisive victory of sir George Rodney over the French fleet off Dominique.

On the 8th of April, at day-break, the French fleet left the harbour of Fort Royal; and admiral Rodney, who had the earliest intelligence of their movements, instantly made the signal for a general chace. Early the next morning he came up with the enemy under Dominique, where the van of the English engaged the rear of the French, but the continued calms prevented a general or close action. In the morning of the 11th a fresh gale sprung up, and the chace was renewed: and towards evening the headmost ships of the van gained so much on one or two of the enemy's ships,

damaged in the late action, that the count de Grasse thought it necessary to bear down for the purpose of protecting them. Sir George Rodney, who had eagerly watched and waited for this opportunity, now manœuvred the fleet with such skill, as to gain the windward of the enemy during the night, and entirely to preclude their retreat. At seven in the morning of the 12th, the two fleets, being ranged in lines directly opposite, engaged with the greatest fury. The French ships being crowded with men, the carnage was prodigious; but no visible impression was made, or material advantage gained, till about noon, when sir George Rodney in the Formidable, followed by his seconds the Namur and the Duke, perceiving an accidental interval which invited the attempt, bore directly with full sail athwart the enemy's line, and successfully broke through, about three ships short of the centre, where the count de Grasse commanded in the Ville de Paris. Being quickly supported by the remainder of his division, the English commander wore round close upon the enemy, and actually separated their line, placing the central ships of the French between two fires. This bold and masterly manœuvre proved decisive. The French, however, continued to fight with the utmost bravery, and the battle lasted till sun-set. The Cæsar was the first ship which struck her colors, having lost her

BOOK XXI. 1782.

BOOK XXI. 1782.

captain, and being almost torn to pieces by the enemy's fire. Soon afterwards, by some unfortunate accident, she blew up, and every soul on board perished. The Glorieux, the Hector, the Ardent, now followed the example of the Cæsar, and the Diadem went down by a single broadside. The count de Grasse in the Ville de Paris, beset on all sides, still held out with heroic bravery, and, though reduced to a wreck, seemed to prefer sinking rather than strike to any thing under a flag. At length admiral Hood, in the Barfleur, approached him just at sun-set, and poured in a most destructive fire, which the count yet sustained for some time, till having three men only left alive and unhurt on the upper deck, he at length struck to his gallant antagonist. Night only closed the action: the shattered remains of the French fleet crowded all the sail they could make for Cape François, and in the morning they were out of sight. Sir Samuel Hood being detached to pursue the flying enemy, came up with five sail off Porto Rico, and captured the Jason and Caton ships of the line, and two frigates, the third with difficulty clearing the Mona passage.

Unfortunately the fleet was becalmed for three days after the action, and sir George Rodney did not escape censure for the previous dilatoriness of his pursuit. Whether more might have been done,

more had been attempted, it is difficult, perhaps impossible, to determine.—"What *had* been is unknown, what *is* appears;"—and certain it is, that this was one of the most glorious and decisive naval victories ever obtained by the arms of Britain. BOOK XXI. 1782.

The number of men slain in this action, and in that of the 9th, on the part of the French, is estimated at 3000 men, and the wounded were nearly double; so that, taking the prisoners on board the captured ships also into the computation, the French must have sustained a loss of ten or twelve thousand men.

Their fleet had on board the land forces intended for the Jamaica expedition; and the whole train of artillery, with thirty-six chests of money destined for the use and subsistence of the troops, were found on board the Ville de Paris and the other ships now taken.

The designs of the confederated powers were thus most completely frustrated, while the loss of men, including both killed and wounded, on the part of the British did not exceed 1100.

For this great victory sir George Bridges Rodney was created a peer of Great Britain, by the title of Baron Rodney, of Rodney-Stoke in the county of Somerset, and a perpetual annuity of 2000*l.* annexed to the title. A motion made and over-ruled in the preceding session of parliament, and intended to have been revived by the present ministry, for an

BOOK XXI. 1782.

inquiry into the conduct of the naval and military commanders at St. Eustatius, was now no more thought of; and the admiral received, as he well deserved, the unanimous thanks of both houses for his eminent services.

In the month of June the Ville de Paris of 120 guns, the Centaur, Glorieux, Hector, Ramilies, and Canada, of 74 guns each, being dispatched from Jamaica, in order to convoy the homeward bound fleet, were exposed to one of the most tremendous storms ever remembered.—Dreadful it is to relate, that the latter ship alone, commanded by the brave captain Cornwallis, reached the English shores.—The merchant vessels sustained proportionate damage. In the month of August the Royal George of 110 guns, with a thousand men on board, admiral Kempenfelt, an excellent veteran officer, being himself of the number, foundered in Portsmouth harbour; being overset by a sudden gust of wind when placed in an inclined position, for the purpose of undergoing a slight careen: a sloop which lay at a small distance was swallowed up in the vortex—and the far greater part of the crews of both vessels miserably perished. From these fatal mischances the public were glad to avert their eyes, and to fix them on other and happier scenes.

The campaign of the present year was destined to be for ever signalized in the annals of history by another event not less glorious to the arms of Bri-

tain than the victory of sir George Rodney. The favorite object of Spain, during the whole of this war, was the recovery of the important fortress of Gibraltar; and after the reduction of Minorca the whole strength of the Spanish monarchy seemed to be directed to this purpose. The duc de Crillon, conqueror of Minorca, was appointed to conduct the siege; and, from the failure of former plans, it was resolved to adopt an entire new mode of operation.

A project was formed by the chevalier D'Arçon, and approved by the Spanish court, to construct a number of floating batteries on a model which it was imagined would secure them from being either sunk or fired. With this view their keels and bottoms were made of an extraordinary thickness, and their sides defended by a kind of rampart, composed of wood and cork long soaked in water, and including between them a large layer of wet sand. The roof was made of a strong rope-work netting, covered with wet hides, and calculated by its sloping position to prevent the shells and bombs from lodging, and to throw them off into the sea before they could produce any effect. The batteries, ten in number, were made of the hulls of large vessels cut down for the purpose, and mounted with heavy brass cannon; and by a most ingenious mechanism, a great variety of pipes and

BOOK XXI. 1782.

canals perforated all the solid workmanship, in such a manner as to convey a continued succession of water to every part of the vessels.

The preparations were enormous in other respects: about 1200 pieces of heavy ordnance had been brought to the spot, to be employed in the different modes of attack; above eighty gun-boats and bomb-ketches were to second the operations of the floating batteries, with a multitude of frigates, sloops, and schooners: and the combined fleets of France and Spain, amounting to fifty sail of the line, were to cover and support the attack, while they heightened the terrible grandeur of the scene. The numbers employed by land and sea against the fortress were estimated at more than one hundred thousand men.

With this force, and by the fire of three hundred cannon, mortars, and howitzers, from the adjacent isthmus, it was intended to attack every part of the British works at one and the same instant. The count d'Artois and the duc de Bourbon, the brother and cousin of the French monarch, and numerous other volunteers of high rank, had repaired to the Spanish camp in order to witness the inevitable fall of that famous fortress, which had so long bid haughty defiance to the power of Spain.

Early on the morning of the 13th of September, the ten battering ships, commanded by admiral don

Moreno, came to an anchor in a line parallel to the rock, at the distance of about one thousand or twelve hundred yards.—The surrounding hills were covered with people, as though all Spain were assembled to behold the spectacle. The cannonade and bombardment on all sides, from the isthmus to the sea, and the various works of the fortress, were tremendously magnificent. The prodigious and unintermitted showers of red-hot balls, of bombs, and carcasses, which filled the air, exhibited a scene perhaps unparalleled in military history. The whole peninsula, like some vast volcano, discharging on all sides its burning lava, seemed enveloped in a sheet or torrent of fire. The battering ships for many hours remained to all appearance unaffected; but about two in the afternoon the admiral's ship was observed to smoke, and soon after that of the prince of Nassau was observed to be in the same condition. The whole line of attack was now visibly disordered. At length the day having closed, the two first ships appeared to be in flames, and others were beginning to kindle; and signals of distress were universally made. Captain Curtis, who commanded the English marine force in the Bay, to complete the confusion, having advanced to the attack with his gun-boats, and raked the whole line of batteries with his fire, the Spanish launches, which had been employed in bringing off the men, no

Glorious defence and final relief of Gibraltar.

BOOK XXI. 1782.

longer dared to appear; but were compelled, after several had been sunk in the attempt, to abandon their ships to the flames, or to the mercy of the English.

The distress of the enemy was now wrought up to the highest pitch of calamity; and the British officers and seamen, seeing all resistance at an end, now exerted themselves to the utmost to save the vanquished foe, and their humanity was, at the close of this memorable conflict, no less conspicuous than their valor. Captain Curtis, in particular, exposed himself to the most imminent personal danger; and his pinnace was almost in contact with one of the largest batteries at the moment of explosion. In the end the floating batteries were all consumed; and the loss of the Spaniards, exclusive of that sustained by the troops on the isthmus, was computed at one thousand five hundred men, whilst that of the garrison amounted to less than one-third of the number.

In the mean time lord Howe, who commanded the grand fleet, consisting of thirty-four sail of the line, was on his passage from Portsmouth in order to throw succours into the fortress. He arrived at Cape St. Vincent the 9th of October, and on the 11th he passed the Straits, where the combined fleets had for some time been stationed in order to intercept him; but a violent tempest drove

vidual, to the extreme eventual detriment of the public. BOOK XXI. 1782.

Had the earl of Shelburne acted with openness and candor in the critical circumstances in which he was placed, there is good ground to believe that his highest ambition might have been gratified, a sincere and cordial union of parties formed, and a firm, efficient, and patriotic administration ultimately established, uncontaminated with the detestable leaven of TORYISM.

On the 11th of July, 1782, the session terminated, and the speech from the throne contained the welcome declaration, "that nothing could be more repugnant to his majesty's feelings than the long continuance of so complicated a war; and that his ardent desire of peace had induced him to take every measure which promised the speediest accomplishment of his wishes."

The military events of the year yet remain to be narrated. The fortress of Gibraltar still continued closely invested by the Spaniards, and the resolute defence of the garrison began to attract the general attention of Europe. Towards the close of the preceding year, 1781, by a most spirited and successful *sortie*, the stupendous works erected by the Spaniards across the isthmus which connects the rock of Gibraltar with the continent were stormed and almost totally demolished, when, after immense

BOOK XXI. 1782.

with the colonies was in fact at an end. The original purpose of France being accomplished, she could have no motive to persevere in a contest, the expence of which was enormous, and the further success uncertain. Spain, after extraordinary exertions, having failed in both her grand objects, the recovery of Gibraltar, and the conquest of Jamaica, had little reason to flatter herself that her future efforts would be more effectual than the past; and Holland would have neither the inclination nor ability to continue the war alone.

Provisional articles of peace with America signed at Paris, Nov. 1782.

During the negotiation with France and Spain, protracted chiefly in consequence of the demand in which Spain for some time resolutely persisted of the cession of Gibraltar, provisional articles of pacification between Great Britain and America were signed on the 30th of November 1782, by which the thirteen provinces were declared free and independent States; and by a boundary line very favorable to America, the whole country southward of the lakes on both sides of the Ohio, and eastward of the Mississippi, was ceded to the colonies, with a full participation of the fisheries on the Banks of Newfoundland and the Gulf of St. Laurence. In return for which the congress engaged to RECOMMEND to the several states to provide for the restitution of the confiscated estates of the loyalists. But this recommendation eventually proved, as might have easily been foreseen, nugatory and

useless; and this wretched portion of his majesty's deluded *subjects* migrated in great numbers to the inhospitable wilds of Nova Scotia and the barren shores of the Bahamas. BOOK XXI. 1783.

Dr. FRANKLIN, so lately the subject of the vilest and grossest abuse, had now the glory of signing this treaty on the part of the United States—the intelligence of which was received in America with emotions of exultation and rapture. The definitive treaty was not however signed till the following year, at the close of which, New York, Charlestown, and Savannah, the only places in the possession of the English, were finally evacuated; and general Washington made his public entry into the first of these cities as soon as the royal army was withdrawn. The rejoicings on this occasion were celebrated with patriotic enthusiasm; after which an affecting leave was taken by the general of the friends and companions of his warfare, who accompanied him on his return to his own province, in silent and solemn procession, to the banks of the North River. When the barge quitted the shore, he waved his hat, bidding them for the last time adieu. To this valediction, fixing their regards on their beloved commander till they could no longer distinguish his person, they replied by acclamations intermingled with suppressed sobs and involuntary tears. In every town and village through which

BOOK XXI.

the general passed he was received with the highest demonstrations of gratitude and joy.

1782. Gen. Washington resigns his commission

When he arrived at Annapolis, he signified to congress his intention to resign the command he had the honor to hold in their service, referring to them the mode in which it should be done. They resolved it should be in a public audience. When the day fixed for that purpose arrived, the hall of the senate-house was crowded with personages of the highest merit and distinction; and general Washington, addressing the president in a speech remarkable only for its dignified simplicity, "demanded leave to surrender into their hands the trust committed to him, and, having finished the work assigned him, to retire from the great theatre of action to the tranquil scenes of private life, earnestly recommending to the protection of Almighty GOD the interests of his dear country, and those who have the superintendance of them to his holy keeping." To this address the president replied in words to the following purport:—"The United States in congress assembled receive with emotions too affecting for utterance the solemn resignation of the authority under which you have led our troops with success through a perilous and doubtful war. Called upon by your country to defend its invaded rights, you accepted the sacred charge before it had formed alliances, and whilst it was without friends

or a government to support you—you have conducted the great military contest with wisdom and fortitude, invariably regarding the rights of the civil power through all disasters and changes—you have, by the love and confidence of your fellow-citizens, enabled them to display their martial genius, and to transmit their fame to posterity. Having defended the standard of liberty in this new world, having taught a lesson useful to those who inflict and to those who feel oppression, you retire with the blessings of your country; but the glory of your virtues will not terminate with your military command—it will continue to animate remotest ages. May the Almighty foster a life so beloved with his peculiar care, and may your future days be as happy as your past have been illustrious!" The grand and interesting scenes which crowded upon the imagination of the general and the president almost deprived them of the power of articulation; and the mingled emotions of joy, regret, and admiration, which agitated the minds of the spectators, were expressed more forcibly by looks and gestures than they could have been by words. BOOK XXI. 1783.

Immediately on this resignation, the late commander "hastened," to use his own words, "with ineffable delight to his seat at Mount Vernon, on the banks of the Potowmac;" whence, at the powerful call of his country, he in a short time again emerged in order to assume the high station

BOOK XXI. 1782.

of president and guardian of that new and noble constitution which, by one of the happiest and most extraordinary efforts of human virtue, wisdom, and ability, has been substituted in America to her former feeble, inefficient, and defective form of government.

Session of parliament, Dec. 1782.

In Great Britain, to the affairs of which we must now revert, the session of parliament commenced December 5, 1782, with a very excellent speech from the throne, in which his majesty, reverting after a long and inglorious series of years to the genuine principles of Whig policy, declared, that he had lost no time in giving the necessary orders for prohibiting offensive operations against America, and had been directing his views to a cordial reconciliation with her. Such being his own inclination, and such the sense of his parliament and people, he had not hesitated to conclude with them provisional articles of peace, by which they were acknowledged free and independent States. He deplored this dismemberment of the empire, which had become a matter both of policy and prudence; but testified a hope that religion, language, interest, and affection, would yet prove a permanent tie of union between the two countries. He spoke with pride and satisfaction of the late gallant defence of Gibraltar: he recommended an immediate attention to the great objects of public receipt and expenditure, and above all to the state of the national debt.

He applauded the liberal principles which had actuated the conduct of parliament respecting Ireland; he pressed a revision of the whole system of trade, with a view to its fullest extension: and turning his attention to Asia, pointed out our vast possessions there as a most important object of regulation and care. He declared that the true spirit of the constitution would be the invariable rule of his conduct, and called upon parliament to exercise their temper, wisdom, and disinterestedness." BOOK XXI. 1782.

Loyal addresses were voted in both houses without a division; but some severe remarks having been directed in the house of peers against the inconsistency of the minister, who had at a former period so strongly opposed the recognition of American independence, his lordship declared "that he had exerted every effort to preserve America to this country;" and with great animation exclaimed, "that he had not voluntarily yielded up this independency—he had merely submitted to the controlling power of necessity and fate. It was not I (said he) that made this cession—it was the evil star of Britain—it was the blunders of a former administration—it was the power of revolted subjects, and the mighty arms of the House of Bourbon." Strength of the minister.

Doubts having arisen whether the acknowledgment of independency was absolute or conditional,

BOOK XXI. 1782.

and lord Shelburne declining to communicate any particulars of a negotiation actually pending, Mr. Fox moved in the house of commons an address to the king, to lay before the house copies of such parts of the provisional articles as related to the same; but this was opposed as inexpedient and improper, not only by the chancellor of the exchequer, Mr. Pitt, but by the late minister lord North; and the question being put, Mr. Fox's motion was negatived by a majority of 219 against 46—a division perhaps fatal to the minister, by inspiring him with high and lofty ideas of his own strength and security.

Preliminaries of peace with France and Spain signed at Paris, Jan. 1783.

On the 23d of December the parliament, after voting one hundred thousand seamen and marines for the service of the ensuing year, adjourned to the 21st of January 1783—the day preceding which, preliminary articles of peace were signed between Great Britain, France, and Spain, which immediately after the recess were submitted to the consideration of the two houses. By this treaty Great Britain guarantied to France the island of Tobago, and restored that of St. Lucia; also the settlements of Goree and Senegal in Africa; and the city of Pondicherri, with her other conquests in the East, accompanied by some additions of territory. Lastly, the claims of Britain respecting Dunkirk were expressly relinquished; and on her

part, France agreed to restore, Tobago excepted, all her valuable and important conquests in the West Indies. His Catholic majesty was allowed to retain Minorca and West Florida, East Florida being also ceded in exchange for the Bahamas. These islands had however already been recovered to the dominion of Great Britain in consequence of the success of an adventurous enterprise, gallantly conducted by colonel Devaux, without the knowledge, and much less the support or assistance of government. Holland having rejected the former advances of the English court towards an accommodation, it was resolved that she should not escape with total impunity; and the British plenipotentiaries were directed to offer the restitution of the Dutch settlements in the possession of England, with the important exception of Trincomalee, which their High Mightinesses declared they could not reconcile with the professions of moderation on the part of his Britannic majesty. On the other hand, Holland demanded an indemnification for the losses and expences of the war—a pretension which the English negotiators peremptorily rejected as totally inadmissible. These opposite claims for the present impeded the conclusion of the treaty with that power; but the preliminaries of peace actually signed were laid before the two houses of parliament by the secretaries of state, lord Grantham and Mr. Townshend, on the 17th of February, and

BOOK XXI. 1782.

BOOK XXI. in both they met with a very violent and unexpected opposition.

1782. Debates on the peace. An address of thanks and approbation being moved in the house of peers by lord Pembroke, and seconded by the marquis of Carmarthen, a succession of able and eloquent speeches were made by the lords Carlisle, Walsingham, Sackville, Stormont, and Loughborough, reprobating the preliminaries of peace as derogatory from the dignity, and in the highest degree injurious to the interests, of the nation. "The dereliction of the loyalists of America, and the Indians our allies, was said to be a baseness unexampled in the records of history. In the lowest ebb of distress we ought not to have subscribed to terms so ignominious. Francis I. when conquered and a captive, wrote, 'that all was lost except his honor;' and his magnanimity finally re-established his fortune. The folly of our negotiations was every where apparent. In Africa, our trade was surrendered to France by the cession of Senegal and Goree—in Asia, Pondicherri was not only given back, but, to render the boon more acceptable, a large territory was made to accompany it—in America, the prohibitions against fortifying St. Pierre and Miquelon were removed, and the limits of the French fishery extended—and, under pretence of drawing a boundary line, the treaty grants to the United States an immense tract of country inhabited by more than twenty Indian

ations—in the West Indies, St. Lucia was relinquished, which was of such military importance, that, so long as we retained this island in our hands, we might well have stood upon the *uti possidetis*, as the basis of negotiation in that quarter—the cession of East Florida to Spain was an extravagance for which it was impossible to find even the shadow of a pretence—To complete the whole, France was allowed to repair and fortify the harbour of Dunkirk, which, in the event of a future war, might annoy our trade in its centre, and counteract all the advantage of our local situation for foreign commerce;—and, what is most wonderful, all these sacrifices are made on the professed ground of arranging matters on the principles of RECIPROCITY."

Defence of the minister.

The minister defended himself from these various attacks with great vigor and ability. His lordship declared, "that PEACE was the object for which the nation at large had discovered the most unequivocal desire; the end he had in view was the advantage of his country, and he was certain that he had attained it. The vast uncultivated tract of land to the southward of the lakes (his lordship said) was of infinite consequence to America, and of none to England; and the retention of it, or even of the forts which commanded it, could only have laid the foundation of future hostility. If our libe-

BOOK XXI. 1782.

rality to Ireland was the subject of just applau why act upon principles of illiberality to Americ The refusal of the Newfoundland fishery wo have been a direct manifestation of hostile int tions; and as it lay on their coasts, it was in r lity impossible to exclude them from it by any strictions; it is an advantage which nature has gi them, and to attempt to wrest it from them wo not only be unjust but impracticable. Of one jection his lordship acknowledged that he dee felt the force. His regret and compassion for situation of the unhappy loyalists were as pung as those of their warmest advocates. This obj tion admitted only of one answer, the answer wh he had given to his own bleeding heart—'It better that a part should suffer, rather than whole empire perish.' He would have dasl from him the bitter cup which the adversities his country held out to him, if peace had not b absolutely necessary—if it had not been called with an unanimity and vigor that could not be sisted. No arts of address or negotiation had b neglected, but the American commissioners had power to concede further. The congress itself not the power—for, by the constitution of A rica, every state was supreme, including in it the legislative and judicial powers; its jurisdicti therefore, was not liable to control. In the m

of interposition, by recommendation alone could the congress act. If, after all, the loyalists should not be received into the bosom of their native country, Britain, penetrated with gratitude for their services, and warm with the feelings of humanity, would afford them an asylum; and it would doubtless be wiser to indemnify them for their losses, than to ruin the nation by a renewal or prolongation of the calamities of war. The cession of East Florida (his lordship said) was rendered unavoidable, by the mistaken and ruinous policy of those ministers who had brought the nation under the miserable necessity of treating with its enemies on terms very different from those it could formerly have commanded. This province, detached from Western Florida, already conquered by the arms of Spain, was however of trivial value; and the amount of its imports and exports bore no proportion to the expence of its civil establishment. We had, nevertheless, obtained a compensation in the restitution of the Bahamas. Although the bounds of the French fishery were somewhat extended, by far the most eligible parts of the Newfoundland coast were left in possession of the English, and a source of future contention removed by the exact ascertainment of limits. In exchange for St. Lucia, France had restored six of the seven islands she had taken, and only retained Tobago—Senegal and Goree had been originally French settlements,

BOOK XXI. 1782.

but their commerce was inconsiderable; and the whole African trade was open to the English, by our settlements on the River Gambia, which were guarantied to us by this treaty. The restoration of Pondicherri, and of our other conquests in the East, must be acknowledged not a measure of expediency so much as of absolute necessity, if the state of the East India Company were adverted to. Such had been the formidable confederacy against which they were compelled to contend, such the wretched derangement of their finances, and so exposed to hazard were their vast and precarious possessions, that nothing but peace could recover to them their ascendency in Asia: in such a situation it was impossible to procure terms of accommodation more honorable. The removal of the restraints relative to the harbour of Dunkirk—restraints disgraceful to France, and of trifling advantage to England—was inveighed against without candor or reason. Dunkirk, as a port, was (as his lordship asserted) far from possessing the consequence ascribed to it; it lies near a shoaly part of the Channel; it cannot receive ships of a large size, and can never be a rendezvous for squadrons; it may indeed be a resort for privateers, but these we know by experience could easily issue from other ports. In fine, the confederacy formed against us was decidedly superior to our utmost exertions—our taxes were exorbitant—our debts, funded and unfunded,

amounted to two hundred and forty-seven millions —our commerce was rapidly declining—our navy was overbalanced by the fleets of the combined powers in the alarming proportion of more than fifty ships of the line. Peace was in these circumstances necessary to our existence as a nation. The best terms of accommodation which our situation would admit had been procured; and his lordship ventured to affirm, that they could be decried or opposed only by ignorance, prejudice, or faction." On a division, the address was carried by a majority of 72 to 59 voices.

A similar address in the house of commons was moved by Mr. Thomas Pitt, and seconded by Mr. Wilberforce, who urged in striking and impressive language the expediency, the necessity, and advantages of peace. On which lord John Cavendish rose and declared, "that he also professed himself an advocate for peace; but the question was not whether a peace were necessary, but whether a better peace might not have been obtained—this was a question which called for a serious deliberation. As the whole of the evidence proper to be produced was not before the house, it was expedient to pause and hesitate. He proposed therefore to annex to the address the following words: "His majesty's faithful commons will proceed to consider of the treaties with that serious and faithful attention which

Terms of peace discussed and ultimately disapproved by the commons.

BOOK XXI. 1783.

a subject of so much importance to the present and future interests of his majesty's dominions deserves; assuring his majesty, nevertheless, of their firm and unalterable determination to adhere inviolably to the several articles for which the public faith is pledged."

This amendment was seconded by Mr. St. John, member for the county of Bedford, and supported, with all the power of his eloquence, by lord North. "The address," this nobleman said, "called for a vote of approbation, and he had no such vote to give; for he considered the peace as dishonorable and destructive. His lordship wished not, however, to set negotiations aside which had been concluded under the sanction of prerogative, nor to put those who advised them under PERIL of PUNISHMENT."

Such was the *candor* of the noble lord, and such his *indulgence* to those guilty of the crime of rescuing the nation from the ruin which impended over it, as the inevitable result of that fatal system patronised and supported by the noble lord and his colleagues, till the patience and credulity of an abused and exasperated people were at length exhausted. He, who by his own wretched misconduct had created the necessity for making the sacrifices in question, ought surely in decency to have been the last man in the nation who should have

suggested the profligate idea of putting those who advised them under PERIL of PUNISHMENT. BOOK XXI.

1783.

Mr. Fox now rose, and declared "his perfect concurrence with the sentiments expressed by the noble lord; and in still more bitter terms reprobated the peace as the most disastrous and humiliating that had ever disgraced any country. He had been accused (he said) of having formed an union with the noble lord whose principles he had opposed for several years of his life; but the grounds of their opposition were removed, and he did not conceive it to be honorable to keep up animosities for ever. He was happy at all times to have a proper opportunity to bury his resentments, and it was the wish of his heart that his friendships should never die. The American war was the source of his disagreement with the noble lord; and, that cause of enmity being now no more, it was wise and fit to put an end to the ill-will, the animosity, the feuds, and the rancor, which it engendered. It was a satisfaction to him to apply the appellation of FRIEND to the noble lord; he had found him honorable as an adversary, and he had no doubt of his openness and sincerity as a friend." Coalition between Mr. Fox and lord North.

By a very great and respectable part of the house, this declaration, which opened a perfectly new scene of things, was most indignantly received. Mr. Powys said, "this was the age of strange confederacies. The world had seen great and arbitrary

BOOK XXI. 1783.

despots stand forth as the protectors of an infant republic—France and Spain had combined to establish the rising liberties of America. The house now surveyed the counterpart of this picture—a MONSTROUS COALITION had taken place between a noble lord and an illustrious commoner—the lofty assertor of the prerogative had joined in alliance with the worshippers of the majesty of the people." On the division the effect of this *monstrous coalition* was immediately visible, there appearing for the amendment 224 against 208 voices.

On the 21st of February lord John Cavendish moved a series of resolutions importing—"1. That, in consideration of the public faith, his majesty's faithful commons will assist him in rendering the peace permanent. 2. That, in concurrence with his majesty, they will endeavour to improve the blessings of peace to the advantage of the nation. 3. That his majesty, in acknowledging the independency of America, has acted in conformity to the sense of parliament, and to the powers vested in him by the act of the last session. 4. That the concessions made to the adversaries of Great Britain by the provisional treaty, and the preliminary articles, are greater than they were entitled to, either from the actual situation of their respective possessions, or from their comparative strength."

A vehement debate arose on the last of these re-

solutions; the merits of the peace were anew discussed; and the coalition, now openly avowed and gloried in, again underwent the severest crimination, and the most poignant ridicule. Lord North, elated with the prospect not merely of perfect impunity, but of a re-admission to the power and emoluments of office, ventured to express, in high language, "his amazement at the reflections which had been thrown out against him. He did not (he said) repent of his conduct while a minister; conscious of his own innocence, he bade defiance to censure or punishment. Proud as he was of the coalition to which he had been invited, it should be understood that he was not disposed to make any sacrifice of his public principles. He dreaded no accusation, and he dared his enemies, whatever might be their abilities, their influence, and their character, to be decisive, and to proceed against him"—expressions surely these, considering the calamities brought upon the nation by the gross and flagrant misconduct of this minister, in the highest degree indecent and insolent. The question being put, was carried against the ministry by a majority of 207 voices to 190.

From this time it was obvious that some change in administration must inevitably take place; but the court hoped that a partial change might suffice. Various conferences were held on the subject of a new arrangement; but the COALITION, knowing

BOOK XXI. 1783.

their own strength, were determined not to deviate in any point from their pre-concerted plan. More than a month passed in a kind of ministerial interregnum, and the want of an efficient government began to be seriously and severely felt. At length Mr. Coke, member for Norfolk, moved an address to the king, "that he would be graciously pleased to take into consideration the distracted and unsettled state of the empire, and condescend to a compliance with the wishes of this house, by forming an administration entitled to the confidence of his people." This was unanimously carried, and presented to the king by such members of the house as were privy-counsellors. His majesty replied, "that it was his earnest desire to do every thing in his power to comply with the wishes of his faithful commons." This answer not giving satisfaction, lord Surry moved in a few days another address, framed in very strong and pointed terms—"assuring his majesty that all delays in a matter of this moment have an inevitable tendency to weaken the authority of his government; and *most humbly intreating* his majesty that he will take such measures towards this object as may quiet the anxiety and apprehension of his faithful subjects." But Mr. Pitt declaring that he had resigned his office of chancellor of the exchequer, and that any resolution or address relative to a new arrangement of administration was unnecessary, lord Surry

Change of administration.

consented to withdraw his motion: and the ministers, who, reluctant to quit the luxury of power, had lingered in office to the last moment, now gave place to their determined and victorious antagonists. BOOK XXI. 1783.

The duke of Portland was placed at the head of the treasury; and lord John Cavendish was re-appointed chancellor of the exchequer; lord NORTH and Mr. FOX were nominated JOINT SECRETARIES of STATE, the first for the home, the latter for the foreign department; lord Keppel, who had recently resigned on account of his disapprobation of the peace, was again placed at the head of the admiralty; lord Stormont was created president of the council; and lord Carlisle was advanced to the post of lord privy-seal. The great seal was put into commission—the chief justice Loughborough, so distinguished for political versatility, "who could change and change and yet go on," being declared first lord commissioner; the earl Northington was appointed to the government of Ireland; viscount Townshend made master-general of the ordnance, lord Sandwich ranger of the parks, and Mr. Burke reinstated in his former post of paymaster of the forces. Of the seven cabinet ministers, the majority, who also occupied the most important posts of administration, were of the old Whig or Rockingham party;—lord Stormont, Duke of Portland minister.

BOOK XXI. 1783.

lord North, and lord Carlisle, contenting themselves rather with a participation of honors and emoluments than of power.

Notwithstanding the admission of these Tory lords therefore into the ministry, it could not but be acknowledged, as to all the grand purposes of government, a WHIG administration—more especially when the ability, the vigor, and the decision of its *efficient leader* were justly and impartially estimated. But, most unfortunately, no impartial estimate of the merits of this novel and heterogeneous arrangement could be hoped. The PUBLIC CONFIDENCE was lost; and universal experience confirms the observation of a celebrated writer, "that the public confidence, once lost, is NEVER completely regained." The coalition was the theme of universal and passionate execration. All those bitter and opprobrious expressions of contumely and reproach against the late minister, lord North, with which the speeches of Mr. Fox and Mr. Burke had been for so many years filled, were now recalled to the general recollection, and excited a degree of anger, indignation, and amazement, which had not been equalled since the memorable and infamous defection of Mr. Pulteney. When lord Chatham, in one of his last speeches in parliament, "wished that the VENGEANCE of the NATION might fall HEAVY upon the MINISTERS;" when

Extreme unpopularity of the coalition administration.

Mr. Fox declared, "that he would pursue even to the SCAFFOLD the authors of the PUBLIC RUIN;" and when Mr. Burke affirmed, "that he had articles of IMPEACHMENT actually framed against lord North, whom he stigmatized as a STATE CRIMINAL;" great allowance ought doubtless to be made for that warmth and ardor of patriotic zeal which might prompt them to exceed the too precise limits of a strict and sober discretion. The late ministers, it must be acknowledged, had done nothing for which they could justly incur legal punishment. But a parliamentary vote of censure and condemnation of those measures and principles which had brought the nation to the brink of perdition was eagerly wished for by the independent and intelligent part of the public; and some satisfactory assurance anxiously expected for the removal of men so unqualified for the task of government from his majesty's presence and councils FOR EVER,—sending them into ignominious retirement, with the CURSES of their COUNTRY upon their HEADS.

Lord Chatham, on receiving, not long before his decease, repeated and high-strained professions of amity and regard from lord Bute, apparently intended to cover some insidious and political purpose, replied without hesitation, "that it was impossible for him to serve the king and country either with lord Bute or lord North; and that if any thing could

BOOK XXI. 1783.

prevent the consummation of public ruin, it could only be new counsels and new counsellors—a real change, from a sincere conviction of past errors, and not a mere palliation, which must prove fruitless." There are no doubt situations of extraordinary difficulty and danger which call for the united exertions of those who have been most opposite in sentiments and conduct: but the nation was not at this time disposed to believe that any peculiar danger to the country existed under the administration of the earl of Shelburne, who, whether in or out of office, had uniformly shewn himself a friend to liberty. The terms of the peace were generally deemed as good as there was any previous reason, from the relative situation of the belligerent powers, to expect; and the COALITION of persons and principles radically hostile, and which no effort of art, or length of time could assimilate, was universally branded as a gross and palpable sacrifice of every sentiment of honor, consistency, and rectitude, on the altar of ambition, interest, and revenge*.

* On the first intelligence of this astonishing coalition, lord Camden remarked to a nobleman of the highest rank, with whom he had been many years on terms of intimate friendship, and who, after a long course of political conflict, had sought and found wisdom, virtue, and happiness, in the shades of retirement,—"There is now an end of all public confidence in public men. Ministers for the next half century are freed

1783.

One of the first measures of the new ministry was to expedite the passing of a bill, before pending, for the purpose of preventing any writs of error or appeal from the kingdom of Ireland from being received by any of his majesty's courts in Great Britain; and of renouncing, in express terms, the legislative authority of the British parliament in relation to Ireland. This was a necessary consequence of the general plan of Irish emancipation; for the mere repeal of the Declaratory Act did not, in the view of the common law, make any difference whatever in the relative situation of the two countries.

Act of renunciation of the authority of Great Britain over Ireland.

Soon after this, a bill was introduced by sir Henry Fletcher, chairman of the East India Company, "for suspending the payments of the Company now due to the Royal Exchequer, and for

Embarrassments of the East India Company.

from all restraint, and may bid defiance to all opposition." To the same purpose the celebrated d'Avenant, speaking of the supposed defection of those from the cause of liberty who had been looked up to and relied upon as its most zealous defenders, says: "Men, finding themselves thus forsaken, would believe they were bought and sold; they would imagine there was no such thing as virtue and honesty remaining; they would think all pretensions to the public good to be nothing but designs of ambitious persons to lift themselves up to high honors upon the shoulders of the people: and when nations have before their eyes an *armed power*, and none in whom they can put any trust, they seldom fail of submitting to the yoke."

BOOK XXI. 1783.

enabling them to borrow the sum of three hundred thousand pounds for their further relief."

Lord John Cavendish declared this bill to be only a branch of a larger plan; and that it was brought forward separately, in order to answer an exigency which did not admit of delay. His lordship viewed the territorial acquisitions of the Company as a fruitful source of grievance. "It would (he said) have been more for their advantage had they confined themselves to the character of merchants. As these acquisitions, however, had been made, they must be preserved, and it was his opinion that the relief necessary to the Company should be granted."

Lord Fitzwilliam, in the upper house, dwelt on the almost desperate situation of the East India Company, and affirmed, "that, unless it passed, their bankruptcy would be inevitable. The expenditure of their settlements had far exceeded their revenue: bills had been drawn upon them which they were unable to answer without a temporary supply, so that the existence of the Company depended upon the success of the bill;" which accordingly passed both houses with little difficulty or opposition.

In the month of April, 1783, the chancellor of the Exchequer brought forward his plan for raising twelve millions by loan. The most re-

markable circumstance attending it was, that the money borrowed was funded at three per cent. at the extravagant rate of one hundred and fifty pounds stock for every hundred pounds sterling; so that an artificial capital of six millions was created beyond and above the sum actually paid into the Exchequer. This absurd and pernicious mode of funding was exposed and reprobated with much ability by Mr. Pitt in the lower house, and the earl of Shelburne in the upper, but with no effect. BOOK XXI. 1783.

Mr. Pitt's plan of parliamentary reform

The former motion of Mr. Pitt for an inquiry into the state of the representation being negatived, he now brought forward, May 7, a specific plan for adding one hundred members to the counties, and abolishing a proportionable number of the burgage-tenure and other small and obnoxious boroughs. This plan, though ably and honorably supported by Mr. Fox, was negatived by a great majority; the numbers on the division being 293 to 149. Mr. Fox declared, "that in his opinion the constitution required renovation; and he regarded it as one of its chief excellencies that it was capable of continual improvements, by involving in itself a renovating principle. It might thus be gradually carried to the highest attainable perfection." As there must of course ever be a stronger opposition against any specific plan of reform in the first instance, than to a comprehensive and general motion of inquiry only, the latter is evi-

BOOK XXI. 1783.

dently the most politic as well as reasonable mode of introducing the question to the notice and discussion of the house; and had it been adopted by Mr. Pitt on this occasion, it could not have so egregiously failed of success. The motion was opposed in a very able speech by lord North, who with an happy allusive pleasantry declared, "that, while some with LEAR demanded an hundred knights, and others with Goneril were satisfied with fifty, he with Regan exclaimed, No, not ONE!" His lordship, in a graver and more argumentative strain, said, "It was not true that the house of commons had not its full and proper weight in the scale of government;—his political life was a proof that it had. It was parliament that had made him a minister. He came amongst them without connexion. It was to them he was indebted for his rise, and they had pulled him down;—he had been the creature of their opinion and the victim of their power;—his political career was consequently a proof of their independence;—the voice of the commons was sufficient to remove whatever was displeasing to the sentiments and wishes of the country; and in such a situation to *parade* about a reformation was idle, unnecessary, inexpedient, and dangerous." This reasoning might perhaps have had some degree of weight, could it be lost to the public recollection, that the noble lord was originally advanced to the premiership by the *fiat*

of the *executive power*, and was continued in office, during the first and last years of his administration at least, by the influence of the same power, in daring contrariety to the clear, unanimous, and decided sense of the nation. His lordship's compulsive resignation at the last proved only that there are limits, beyond which even the complaisance of the representative body does not extend: and the infatuation of the ministers became at length so notorious, that parliament, alarmed at their rashness, and astonished at their folly, happily and critically interposed to save the nation from destruction.

BOOK XXI. 1783.

A bill for regulating the trade of the African Company being introduced towards the close of the session, with a clause prohibiting the officers of the company from *exporting negroes*, that humane, intelligent, and respectable class of citizens known by the appellation of Quakers, convened in their annual assembly in the metropolis, embraced this favorable occasion to petition the house of commons, "That the clause in question might be extended to all persons whatsoever; professing themselves deeply affected with the consideration of the rapine, oppression, and blood, attending this traffic. Under the countenance of the laws of this country," say the petitioners, "many thousands of these our fellow-creatures, entitled to the NATURAL RIGHTS OF MANKIND, are held as personal pro-

Remarkable petition of the Quakers.

BOOK XXI. 1783.

perty in cruel bondage. Your petitioners regret, that a nation professing the Christian faith should so far counteract the principles of humanity and justice." This petition excited in a remarkable degree the attention of the house and of the public, and laid the foundation of the subsequent noble and generous efforts, to effect a total abolition of this detestable commerce, and restore to the common rights of humanity that despised and unfortunate race born only to misery, and to whose wretched and most compassionable lot it has fallen "to plough the winter's wave and reap despair." Much business, comprehending details not sufficiently important to demand a place in general history, having been completed, the parliament was at length prorogued, July 16, 1783, by a speech in which his majesty intimated his intention of calling them together at an early period, in order to resume the consideration of the affairs of the East Indies, which would demand their most serious and unintermitted attention.

Order of council for the regulation of commerce between the continent of America and the WestIndies.

In the course of the summer, the king, as legally empowered by an act passed for that purpose, issued an order in council, limiting the commerce between the continent of America and the British West India islands to ships British built. This was conformable to the grand principle on which the Act of Navigation was originally founded;

and though this restriction gave extreme offence to the inhabitants of the United States, they could not in reason complain that they were precluded from enjoying the advantages of dependence and independence at one and the same time. The definitive treaties with France, Spain, and America, were at this period signed with no material alteration; also preliminaries of peace with the States General, by which all the conquests of England were restored, except the town of Negapatnam on the coast of Coromandel, which their High Mightinesses found themselves, however reluctantly, at length compelled to cede. BOOK XXI. 1783. Treaty of peace signed between England and Holland.

Nearly at this time an ambassador from the United States of America, Mr. Adams, arrived in London. On his first audience at St. James's, the king, addressing himself with much politeness to him, said, "that he had been the last man in his kingdom who had assented to the recognition of American independence; but, now it was actually established, he would be the last man in the kingdom to violate it."—A lively illustration on one hand of the invincible pertinacity, and on the other of the probity of intention, which enter so conspicuously into the character of this ill-advised, misguided, and unfortunate monarch.

In the course of the present year died Dr. Frederic Cornwallis, primate of England, who filled the Death of archbishop Cornwallis.

BOOK XXI. 1783.

archiepiscopal see of Canterbury almost fifteen years. He was a churchman moderate in principle, and amiable in manners. If he could not boast the profound learning of a Potter, or the exalted beneficence of a Herring, much less could he be charged with the deep malignity of a Wake, or the narrow bigotry of a Secker. By a wise and happy choice he was succeeded by Dr. Moore, bishop of Bangor—a prelate who, in difficult times and circumstances, has acquired universal esteem by his mildness of disposition, his good sense, discretion, and general liberality of sentiment and conduct.

During this interval of political repose in England, it will not be improper to cast a transient view at the general posture and relative situation of the great continental powers.

State of Europe.

One of the most interesting events which, since our last notice of foreign politics, had taken place in Europe, was the death of the elector of Bavaria, December 30, 1777. This prince was the last of the Ludovician line of electors, which had been in possession of the duchy and its appendages near five hundred years. These dominions reverted to the heir general of the deceased, Charles Theodore elector Palatine; who being now himself advanced in life, and having no issue, both electorates seemed likely soon to fall into the possession of the duke

of Deux-ponts, his nearest relation in the male Palatine line. Scarcely, however, had the new elector arrived at Munich, before he found that he was opposed by a rival of such superior force as to leave him no room to hope, however clear his right, for success in the competition. BOOK XXI. 1778.

This was no other than the emperor, who advancing, on grounds of which it would be idle to examine into the validity, his imperial claim to the whole of the Lower Bavaria, and to all those districts of the Upper which had been formerly fiefs of the kingdom of Bohemia, caused a vast army to enter the electorate, notwithstanding the remonstrances of the regency, who in vain pleaded the laws of the empire and the rights of sovereignty. Austrian invasion of Bavaria.

The elector Theodore, equally unable and unwilling to risk the contest, signed a convention with the emperor in January 1778, in which all the pretended rights of the court of Vienna were allowed and conceded in their fullest extent. This transaction, however, could not fail to excite a general alarm throughout the empire.

The duke of Deux-ponts formally protested against this invasion and dereliction of his rights, and called upon the princes and co-estates of the empire, as members of the Germanic body, and guarantees of the treaty of Westphalia, to interpose for the preservation of the constitution, thus openly violated.

BOOK XXI. 1783.

The king of Prussia, who regarded with a jealous eye whatever tended to the aggrandizement of the house of Austria, assumed, as well became him, the lead in this important and common concern. His several memorials on this subject to the court of Vienna, and to the diet of the empire assembled at Ratisbon, were however extremely guarded and temperate, whilst the replies of the imperial court were in the highest degree haughty and supercilious.—"The court of Vienna knew her own rights, and was the proper judge of them. An *amicable arrangement* had taken place, and his imperial majesty did not think himself accountable to any prince of the empire for the measures he had pursued; and, being thoroughly satisfied with the JUSTICE of his CAUSE, was resolved to support his pretensions by force of arms."

The king of Prussia, who evidently appears to have been reluctant to proceed to extremities, at length proposed to the emperor to guaranty to him in full right the cession of two considerable districts of the duchy of Bavaria, contiguous to the Austrian territories, on condition that the court of Vienna would relinquish her remaining claims. But this being refused with disdain, his Prussian majesty published a manifesto early in July 1778, stating "the unwarrantable and violent conduct of the imperial court, which, if suffered to proceed

without control, would effect the total overthrow of the whole Germanic system."

It was equally evident on the other hand, that the emperor had from the first expected, and was prepared to risk the event of, a war for the sake of this great and most desirable requisition *.

War between Prussia and the emperor.

With respect to the emperor, this was "the spring of hope, and the summer of the passions;" but the monarch of Prussia, who had already attained the highest seat in the temple of Fame, and was now fast declining into the vale of years, would willingly have avoided a war which presented no glorious or splendid object, and which was imposed upon him by an unwelcome and imperious political necessity.

Saxony, departing from its long and intimate union with the imperial house, now joined with all its forces the king of Prussia, who in the beginning of July entered Bohemia at the head of a vast army on the side of Silesia, while another of nearly equal force, under his brother prince Henry, penetrated the passes of the mountains which separate

* "When the emperor surveys the map of Germany," says a most agreeable and, though a judge of the High Court of Justiciary in Scotland, a most LIBERAL writer, the late lord Gardenstone, "he may well apply to the electorate of Bavaria the words of the old rapacious neighbour in HORACE,—

——————O si angulus ille
Proximus accedat qui nunc denormat agellum!"

BOOK XXI. 1783.

that kingdom from Saxony. Of the two Austrian armies, the emperor in person, assisted by mareschal Lasci, commanded one, and the famous mareschal Laudohn the other; the whole plan and conduct of this campaign, which on the part of the Austrians was entirely defensive, being chiefly ascribed to the latter justly celebrated general.

After a great variety of military movements and manœuvres unnecessary to particularize, and indeed almost unintelligible in the relation, but which were said on both sides to display uncommon proofs of skill, the king of Prussia, not being able to bring the Austrians to a general action, was finally compelled to evacuate Bohemia with great loss. Mareschal Laudohn, in the whole of his operations, seemed closely to have adhered to the model of his renowned predecessor, mareschal Traun, whose defensive campaign of 1744 in Bohemia is highly extolled by the Prussian monarch as a master-piece of professional judgment and ability. It was however remarked that the emperor gave in this first essay no indications of military genius; and it was even affirmed, that his excessive caution alone preserved the army of prince Henry from destruction—mareschal Laudohn having completely succeeded in preventing the junction of the two Prussian armies, and an attack upon that of the prince in his retreat presenting every prospect of advantage.

Soon after the termination of the campaign, a negotiation for peace was set on foot by the court of Vienna, whose councils the emperor could no longer influence. His mother, the empress-queen, who possessed all the real and efficient power of the Austrian house, sighed for peace, while the emperor her son was eager and ardent for the prosecution of the war, though nothing could be less encouraging than the prospects now presented to him. The whole empire was firmly united in opinion and interest in opposition to the imperial claims. Russia openly declared, by her ambassador at Ratisbon, that if the usurpation of Bavaria was not relinquished, she should be under the necessity of furnishing to Prussia the auxiliary troops stipulated by treaty; and even France declared to the Diet her resolution in no respect to deviate from her guarantee of the treaty of Westphalia. BOOK XXI. 1783.

There is moreover good ground to believe that the empress-queen, who had in the latter years of her life become a religious devotee, entertained very serious scruples of conscience at the sacrificing so many myriads of lives in support of an act of flagrant perfidy and injustice. It is even asserted that she discovered symptoms of extreme indecision and agitation of mind in this business. No entreaties could prevail on her to be present at any military exhibitions. She passed half her time at

BOOK XXI. 1783.

prayer and at the cathedral of Vienna, remained for several hours together on her knees, invoking the divine blessing to aid her efforts for maintaining the peace of Germany*. Prince Kaunitz was gloomy and thoughtful, the courtiers were embarrassed, and the emperor alone affected to appear gay and cheerful.

The motives for peace being thus urgent, the preliminary articles were signed at Teschen, May 13, 1779, in conformity to which the whole electorate was restored to its rightful possessor, the district of Burghausen excepted. The empress did not long survive the pacification she so anxiously sought, dying November 12, 1780, much lamented by her subjects, whom she had governed for forty years with parental affection and indisputable ability. The bigotry and superstition of this princess, which threw a cloud over the evening of her life, did not incite her to any acts of cruelty or intolerance. By the mildness and beneficence of her administration she acquired and retained to the last in every part of her vast dominions an unbounded popularity; and the Hungarian nation in particular, who with the obstinacy of desperation opposed for a long succession of years the despotism of her predecessors by force of arms, submitted with joy and gratitude to her just and generous sway.

* Wraxall's Memoirs of the Court of Berlin.

BOOK XXI. 1783.

Joseph II. her son, early discovered that rage for innovation, without discrimination or judgment, which has in the sequel rendered his name so unfortunately memorable. His character was however as yet very imperfectly known, and Europe thought much better of this monarch, both in regard to the rectitude of his disposition and the extent of his capacity, than time, the grand umpire of opinions, has eventually confirmed. "Ignorant of the sciences belonging to the art of government," says a writer who intimately knew both the man and the monarch, "his intercourse was with people still more ignorant than himself. His ideas were confused, and he attempted in vain to emancipate himself from vulgar prejudices. His pride would admit of no contradiction. He desired to appear infallible, and to impart this infallibility to all his officers. Flatterers and deceivers pressed round the throne, and, terming his obstinacy firmness, and his restlessness love of glory, steeled his heart, naturally obdurate, against noble and exalted sentiments; and assured him that he would become the greatest of princes, and obscure the glory of the great Frederic. Finding insurmountable obstacles to every innovation tending to good, he adopted measures of violence in preference to policy, and would have been in time the greatest of tyrants*."

* Vide Memoirs of the baron Trenck.

BOOK XXI. 1783.

His reign nevertheless commenced with an act of beneficence, truly imperial, in the promulgation of letters-patent, granting the free exercise of their religion to the protestants all over the Austrian dominions. By a second edict, he declared all religious foundations in the Austrian Netherlands exempt from all foreign ecclesiastical jurisdiction; and other regulations were adopted for the purpose of reducing the number of religious houses, and of discountenancing all monastic institutions.

Journey of the pope to Vienna.

The Roman pontiff, Pius VI., whose zeal for the church was very great, alarmed at these proceedings, declared to the emperor his intention, notwithstanding his advanced age, to make in person a journey to Vienna, in order to confer with his imperial majesty on the subject of these recent and dangerous innovations. The emperor in reply assured his holiness, that his heart was truly catholic and apostolic; but that with regard to the late regulations, they had been made with due consideration and good advice; and that, having already decided upon them, his holiness's journey was in this view entirely superfluous.

The pope however would not be deterred from the execution of his design, and on his actual arrival at Vienna in the spring of 1782 he was treated by the emperor with the highest demonstrations of respect and affection: but no alterations whatever

to public measures took place, as may easily be BOOK XXI. 1783.
pposed, in consequence of this visit, which ill com-
rted with the prescriptive haughtiness of the Vati-
n. The very attempt to effect a change in the
perial system of policy by any personal efforts of
gument or eloquence was a certain indication of
akness and vanity. On his return to Rome,
e holy father had the mortification to find his
rney the object of very general ridicule; and an
onymous pasquinade declared, "that what Gre-
ry VII., the greatest of priests, had established,
us VI., the most contemptible of priests, had de-
royed*." The emperor on his part gained by

* The celebrated cardinal de Bernis, whose discernment
d knowledge of mankind were of the superior class, used, as
e are told, every possible means to dissuade the pope from his
eposterous resolution of visiting the emperor. "Every body
aid the cardinal in a letter afterwards published) is of opinion,
at you are about to take an improper step, which, without
ing of the smallest advantage to the Holy See, will be a dis-
ace to the pontifical dignity. Even at Rome it is already
rned into ridicule. Now you know with what effect that
eapon is used against religion and its ministers. Those who
e about your person dare not oppose your wishes. They are
acquainted with the spirit of courts and the spirit of the age.
or Heaven's sake then, holy father, suspend the execution
your project, till you know the sentiments of the courts of
rance and Spain, and of such others whose opinion ought to
ave any weight with you."—"You see (said the cardinal)
at the emperor tells you before hand, that nothing is capable
f making him change his determination. Why then should

BOOK XXI. 1783.

his multiplied, rapacious, and precipitate reform no increase of reputation with truly enlighten persons, who clearly perceived that his unbounde love of power was not blended with any just prin ples of philanthropy or philosophy.

The good understanding of the Russian and Otto man empires had recently suffered great interru tion, in consequence of the opposition of interes involved in the election of a khan of the Tartar with respect to which neither power, agreeably t the terms of the late peace, had a right to interfere An explanatory agreement at length took plac (March 1779), by which the khan Sahim Gueri, elected through the influence of Russia, was acknowledged as lawful khan of the Crimea by the Turkish government.

In the year 1782, nevertheless, these disturbances were revived, and the czarina entered into an alliance, offensive and defensive, with the emperor, in the evident expectation of an immediate war with the Porte. And haughty memorials were delivered by the ambassadors of both the imperial courts at

you take so degrading a step to no purpose?" Finding his bold though friendly remonstrances, which the pope however took in good part, of no avail, he concluded his last note with the expression—"Tristis est anima mea usque ad mortem." And from this time he was accustomed to say, "I see well that the reign of Pius VI. will in the end cost him many a tear."—Vide Life of Pope Pius VI.

stantinople, insisting that the Ottoman court BOOK XXI. 1783.
uld not henceforth interpose in the affairs of the
men; nor encroach upon the prerogatives of the
ces of Moldavia and Walachia; nor oppose the
navigation of the Euxine.

Soon after this the khan of the Tartars, in con-
nity doubtless to the pre-concerted plan of the
erial courts, signified his resolution to resign his
wn into the hands of the czarina. After some
cted hesitation, her imperial majesty declared by
ublic manifesto, dated April 1783, her accept-
e of this resignation, and her determination to
e once for all the peninsula of the Crimea, to-
ber with the island of Taman, and the province
Cuban Tartary, on the other side of the Straits
Caffa, extending to Circassia, under her own im-
diate administration.

The court of Constantinople, roused by this new
unexpected attack, replied to the Russian
nifesto with unusual animation and energy.—
What pretensions of right (say they) can her im-
ial majesty have to territories annexed for ages
he dominion of the Porte? Would such claims
any part of the Russian empire not be instantly
sted? And can it be presumed that the Sublime
te, however desirous of peace, will acquiesce in
t ambition may term policy, but justice and
ty would deem usurpation? What Christian

BOOK XXI. 1769.

power has the Porte offended? Whose territori have the Ottoman troops invaded? In the coun of what prince is the Turkish standard displayed Content with the boundaries of empire assigned hi by GOD and his prophet, the wishes of the Por are for peace; but if the court of Russia be de termined in her claims, the Sublime Porte, appea ing to the world for the justice of her proceedings must prepare for war, relying on the decrees of Hea ven, and confident of the interposition of the Pro phet of prophets, who will protect his faithful ser vants in the hour of every difficulty."

The Russian court however appeared no less re solute to maintain and substantiate, than that o Constantinople to resist her claims; and prince Po temkin, a nobleman of great influence and authori at the court of Petersburg, was delegated to tak possession of the countries in question, in th name of the empress. A war now therefore ap peared inevitable; but, happily for the interests o humanity, the two leading kingdoms of Euro were at this period governed by wise and benefice ministers, who sincerely wished to secure to ma kind the inestimable blessings of universal peac

Cession of the Crimea by the Turks to Russia.

From motives which reflected the highest hon on those celebrated statesmen, the comte de Ve gennes and Mr. Fox offered the mediation of the respective sovereigns to effect an accommodatio

and the Porte, perceiving itself in a manner abandoned by France her antient ally, and wholly unable to contend against that tide of adverse fortune which threatened to overwhelm the empire of the Ottomans in final and remediless ruin, at length most reluctantly assented to the cession of the provinces actually in the possession of Russia; and a treaty or convention to this purport was signed in the month of January 1784.

Thus did the court of Petersburg, with no expence of blood or treasure, acquire an invaluable addition of territory, affording an unbounded scope for the aggrandizement of her commercial and maritime power, and which extended the limits of her empire from the frozen sea of Archangel to the utmost shores of the Euxine. A new city, called Cherson, had been already founded by the empress in the centre of her Turkish conquests, destined probably, at some future period, to become the emporium of wealth and the seat of power. The former designations of the ceded countries were now, by the imperial mandate, abolished. Those barbarous names so offensive to classic fastidiousness were no longer heard, and the antient appellations, after the lapse of a thousand years, restored. The Crimea became the Taurica—Actiar was changed to Sebastopolis—Caffa was lost in Theodosia—and the Bog was happily superseded by the Hypanis.

BOOK XXI.

1788. Death of Joseph I. king of Portugal.

The political state of the remaining countries of Europe either requires no distinct animadversion, or would lead to discussions not within the limits of the present history. It may however be transiently remarked, that an event very little to be lamented took place February 1777, in the death of don Joseph I. king of Portugal. His reign was marked in the records of history only by weakness and calamity; it was deeply stained with domestic blood, and rendered detestable by worse than Dionysian devices of cruelty. The earthquake of 1755 had laid his capital in ruins, and shook the kingdom, in a political as well as physical sense, to its centre. The conspiracy of 1757 awakened all the malignity of ceaseless suspicion, and filled the dungeons of the state with the most virtuous of her citizens. Saved from ruin in the ensuing war with Spain by the interposition of England, this monarch could not forget nor forgive the magnitude of the obligation; and the commerce of the British merchants, under the arbitrary and capricious conduct of the marquis de Pombal, his favorite minister, suffered under continual oppression.

He was succeeded by his eldest daughter, donna Isabella, married by virtue of a papal dispensation to don Pedro, brother to the late king. At her accession the prison-doors were thrown open, and eight hundred persons were set at liberty; but these were

said to bear a very small proportion to the numbers who had perished in those regions of darkness and despair, under the sufferings and horrors of their confinement. BOOK XXI. 1783.

Pursuant to the intimation in the concluding speech of the last session, the parliament of Great Britain was convened at an early period of the winter, November 11, 1783; and his majesty stated, as a principal object of their consideration, the situation of the East-India Company. "The utmost exertions of their wisdom (he said) would be required to maintain and improve the valuable advantages derived from our India possessions, and to promote and secure the happiness of the native inhabitants of those provinces." Session of parliament, Nov. 1783.

The address passed without opposition. Mr. Pitt, in his speech on this occasion, warned the ministers, "that, as to the affairs of India, it would not be enough to attempt measures of palliation and of a temporary nature; that would only increase the danger by removing it to a distance, and he expressed his surprise that this important business had been so long postponed."

Mr. Fox, well pleased at this language, acknowledged "that the state of India was such as would ill brook delay in their deliberations, and he was happy to give notice that on that day se'nnight he should be prepared to make a motion relative to India."

BOOK XXI.

1783. Mr. Fox's India bill moved.

On the 18th of November, accordingly, Mr. Fox moved for leave to bring in a bill for vesting the affairs of the East-India Company in the hands of certain commissioners, for the benefit of the proprietary and the public. The plan proposed by Mr. Fox was marked with all the characteristics of his ardent and daring mind. The total derangement of the finances of the Company, and their utter incompetency to govern the vast territories of which they had, by very questionable means, obtained the possession, was too evident to admit of contradiction. The evil was notorious; the only difficulty was to devise an adequate remedy.

This famous bill proposed no less than to take from the directors and proprietors the entire administration, not of their territorial merely, but of their commercial affairs, and to vest the management and direction of them in the hands of seven commissioners named in the bill, and irremovable by the crown, except in consequence of an address of either house of parliament. These were earl Fitzwilliam, president of the board; viscount Lewisham, eldest son to the earl of Dartmouth; the right honorable Frederic Montague; the honorable George Augustus North; sir Gilbert Elliot, sir Henry Fletcher, baronets; and Robert Gregory, esq. who, it could not fail to be remarked, were divided upon the model and in the same proportion as the members of the cabinet.—These commissioners were to be as-

sisted by a subordinate board of nine directors, to be named in the first instance by parliament and afterwards chosen by the proprietors. And the bill empowered these commissioners and directors immediately to enter into possession of all lands, tenements, books, records, vessels, goods, merchandize, and securities, in trust for the Company. BOOK XXI. 1783.

This act, by which the charter of the Company was entirely superseded, was to continue in force four years, that is, till the year after the next general election;—and it was accompanied by a second bill, enacting very excellent, wise, and equitable regulations for the future government of the British territories in Hindostan. The astonishment excited by the disclosure of this plan was very great; and while it was on one side of the house extolled as a master-piece of genius, virtue, and ability, it was on the other reprobated as a deep and dangerous design, fraught with mischief and ruin. "INDIA, it was true," said Mr. Pitt, "wanted reform, but not such a reform as this;—it wanted a *constitutional* alteration, and not a *tyrannical* one, that broke through every principle of equity and justice. By the bill before the house, an attack was made on the most solemn charters: it pointed a fatal blow against the faith and integrity of parliament: it broke through every tie by which man was bound to man. The principle of this bill once established, what secu-

BOOK XXI. 1783.

rity had the other public companies of the kingdom? What security had the Bank of England? What security had the national creditors, or the public corporations? Or, indeed, what assurance could we have for the GREAT CHARTER itself, the foundation of all our liberties? It would be folly in the extreme to suppose, that the principle, once admitted, would operate only on the present occasion. Good principles might sleep, but bad ones never. It was the curse of society, that when a bad principle was once established, bad men would always be found to give it its full effect. The bill under consideration included a confiscation of the property, and a disfranchisement of the members, of the East-India Company—all the several articles of whose effects were transferred by violence to strangers. Imagination was at a loss to guess at the most insignificant trifle that had escaped the harpy jaws of A RAVENOUS COALITION. The power was pretended indeed to be given in trust for the benefit of the proprietors; but in case of the grossest abuse of trust, to whom was the appeal? To the proprietors? No:—to the majority of either house of parliament, which the most contemptible minister could not fail to secure, with the patronage of above two millions sterling given by this bill. The influence which would accrue from this bill—a new, enormous, and unexampled influence—was indeed in the highest

degree alarming. Seven commissioners chosen ostensibly by parliament, but really by administration, were to involve in the vortex of their authority the patronage and treasures of India. The right honorable mover had acknowledged himself to be a man of ambition; and it now appeared that he was prepared to sacrifice the king, the parliament, and the people, at the shrine of his ambition. He desired to elevate his present connexions to a situation in which no political convulsions, and no variations of power, might be able to destroy their importance, and put an end to their ascendency."

BOOK XXI. 1783.

These and similar arguments against the present extraordinary measure of the minister were also ably and eloquently enforced by the lord advocate, Mr. Jenkinson, Mr. Grenville, and others. On the other hand it was with equal eloquence and ability vindicated by Mr. Fox, who with warmth declared, "that he would risk upon the execution of this bill whatever was most dear to him—whatever men most valued: the character of integrity, of talents, of honor, of present reputation and future fame;—these he would stake upon the constitutional safety, the enlarged policy, the equity and wisdom of this measure. Make the commissioners removable at will, and you set all the passions of human nature afloat. Invest them with power upon the same tenure as the British judges hold their station, re-

BOOK XXI. 1783.

movable upon delinquency, punishable upon guilt, but fearless of danger if they discharge their trust, and they will be liable to no seducement, and will execute their functions with glory to themselves, and for the common good of the country and mankind. Every word in this bill breathes suspicion. It supposes that men are but men; it confides in no integrity, it trusts to no character; it annexes responsibility to every action, every exertion of the various powers which it creates and confers."—While the bill was pending, a petition was presented from the Company, representing the measure as subversive of their charter, and operating as a confiscation of their property, without charging against them any specific delinquency, without trial, without conviction—a proceeding contrary to the most sacred privileges of British subjects—and praying to be heard by counsel against the bill. The city of London also presented a strong petition to the same effect. But it was carried with rapidity through all its stages in the house of commons by decisive majorities, the division on the second reading being 217 to 103 voices. And on the 9th of December, Mr. Fox, attended by a numerous train of members, presented the bill at the bar of the house of lords. On this occasion, earl Temple declared, "that he was happy to embrace the first opportunity of entering his protest against so in-

Mr. Fox's India bill passes the commons, but is rejected by the lords.

FAMOUS a bill—against a stretch of power so truly alarming, and that went near to seize upon the most inestimable part of our constitution—our CHARTERED RIGHTS."

The duke of Richmond rose on the same side, and displayed in a striking manner the inconsistency of a part at least of the present administration, by a view of the protest entered by lord Rockingham and other noble lords, on the journals of that house, against the India bill of 1773. This famous WHIG protest concludes in the following remarkable words: "If the provisions and precedent of this bill should render the public faith of Great Britain of no estimation, the franchises, rights, and properties of Englishmen precarious; if the boundless fund of corruption furnished by this bill to the servants of the crown should efface every idea of honor, public spirit, and independence, from every rank of people; after struggling vainly against these evils, we have nothing left but the satisfaction of recording our names to posterity, as those who resisted the whole of this iniquitous system, and as men who had no share in betraying to blind prejudices or sordid interest every thing that has hitherto been held sacred in this country." To this protest the signature of the duke of Portland, who held the highest post under the present administration, and that of lord Fitzwilliam, the future president of the new India board, were affixed. Lord Thurlow de-

BOOK XXI. 1783.

clared the present bill "to be a most atrocious violation of private property, in justification of which if the plea of political necessity were urged, that necessity must be proved by evidence at the bar of the house, and not by reports from a committee, to which he should pay as much attention as to the romance of Robinson Crusoe. They were told, that the finances of the Company were much deranged; but could parliament in justice forget that the Company were restricted from employing that credit which resulted from its great and flourishing situation? and that, if those restrictions were taken off to-morrow, every demand to the state would be discharged? Could parliament forget that the politics of this country had involved the Company in an extensive and ruinous war? and that, while we encountered loss, misfortune, and disgrace, in every other quarter of the globe, this delinquent Company had surmounted the most astonishing difficulties in India? Would parliament forget, that, when peace was restored to this unfortunate country, the conquests of this delinquent Company were given up, to prevent further sacrifices of our more favorite possessions?"

The second reading of the bill took place on the 15th of December*, when counsel was heard

* During this interval, the regular business of the session was proceeding in the usual manner in the house of commons; and on the 12th of December, amongst the ordinary estimates

at the bar of the house in behalf of the Company. At eleven o'clock, the counsel requested of the house an adjournment for the conclusion of their evidence; and a motion being made, it was carried in opposition to the ministers by 87 to 79 voices. BOOK XXI. 1783.

On the 17th it was moved, That the bill be REJECTED. On this occasion lord Camden distinguished himself by a most able and eloquent speech against a measure which his lordship affirmed to be in the highest degree pernicious and unconstitutional. "To divest the Company of the management of their own property and commercial concerns was (his lordship said) to treat them as IDIOTS; and he regarded the bill not so much in the light of a commission of bankruptcy as of lunacy.

of the year, eighteen thousand pounds were charged for the purchase of the princely mansion of sir Gregory Page, on Blackheath, as a royal military academy—a sum not more than equal to the value of the materials. And as several thousand pounds would by this means be saved in the repair of the old incommodious building at Woolwich, and likewise an allowance of five hundred pounds per annum for lodgings to the officers, who would henceforth be accommodated in the new academy, the expence was reduced to a mere nothing, whilst the purchase would have done honor to the taste and magnificence of the nation; yet was it opposed with most preposterous obstinacy by some weak and perverse members of the house, as a wanton and scandalous waste of the public money; and the chancellor of the exchequer had the injudicious complaisance to consent to omit it on the report.

BOOK XXI. 1783.

But as the means of throwing an enormous addition of weight into the scale, not of regal but ministerial influence, it was still more alarming. Were this bill to pass into a law (his lordship forcibly declared) we should see the king of England and the king of Bengal contending for superiority in the British parliament." After a vehement debate, the motion of rejection was carried by 95 against 76 voices. As the first divisions in the upper house were favorable to this bill, it will readily be imagined that some powerful cause, adequate to the extraordinary and unexpected effect produced, must have intervened. The solution of the phænomenon was indeed sufficiently obvious.

On the 11th of December, earl Temple had held a conference with the KING, in the course of which his lordship clearly and fully explained to his majesty the nature and tendency of a bill which had been hitherto honored with the king's entire approbation. The royal indignation was in consequence of this discovery excited in a very high degree. The monarch considered himself as having been DUPED and DECEIVED. A card was immediately written, stating, "That his majesty allowed earl Temple to say, that whoever voted for the India Bill was not only not his friend, but would be considered by him as his enemy. And if these words were not strong enough, earl Temple might use

whatever words he might deem stronger or more to the purpose." This interposition becoming a matter of public notoriety, Mr. William Baker, member for Hertford, moved the house of commons on the very day the bill was rejected by the lords, "That it was now necessary to declare, that to report any opinion or pretended opinion of the king upon any bill, or other proceeding, depending in either house of parliament, with a view to influence the votes of the members, was a high crime and misdemeanor." Mr. Pitt treated the motion lightly, and represented it as unworthy of the dignity of the house to found any resolutions upon rumors and hearsays.—But earl Nugent, father-in-law to earl Temple, with more seriousness and firmness declared, "That the resolutions before them went to the utter annihilation of sovereignty. What! were not peers by their rank and situation hereditary counsellors of the crown?—Would that house dare to derogate from the high dignity which the constitution had annexed to their station? Every peer, and indeed every commoner, under certain restrictions, had a right to address the sovereign. But the tendency of these resolutions was to make the monarch a kind of prisoner of state, and to shut him up from every species of information unacceptable to the existing administration. Were any relation of his, in a crisis of difficulty and danger, to con-

BOOK XXI. 1778.

BOOK XXI. 1783.

vey truths to his sovereign of high importance to be known, though at the risk of incurring the utmost punishment which the indignation of that house could inflict, he should consider his conduct not merely as justifiable, but transcendently meritorious, and such as would transmit his name with honor to the latest posterity." Other members acknowledged something of irregularity in these proceedings, and wished that a measure so dangerous might have been counteracted in a mode more open and constitutional; but a great good had been obtained, and in this case it were not wise to examine into the cause with too accurate a discrimination and too severe a scrutiny. The resolution moved by Mr. Baker passed nevertheless by a great majority.

The quarrel between the crown and the ministers, supported as they were by a decided majority of the house of commons, having now become public and palpable, an entire change of administration was at all hazards determined upon. At midnight on the 18th of December, a royal message was sent to the secretaries of state, demanding the seals of their several departments; and early the next morning letters of dismission, signed TEMPLE, were sent to the other members of the cabinet.

Sudden dismission of the coalition ministers.

In a few days Mr. Pitt was declared first lord of the treasury and chancellor of the exchequer;

Mr. Pitt first minister.

he marquis of Carmarthen, and Mr. Thomas Townshend, created lord Sydney, were nominated secretaries of state; lord Thurlow was reinstated as lord-chancellor; earl Gower, created in the sequel marquis of Stafford, as president of the council; the duke of Rutland was constituted lord privy-seal; lord Howe placed at the head of the admiralty, and the duke of Richmond of the ordnance. The earl of Northington was recalled from his government of Ireland, to which lord Temple, who had retained the seals of secretary only three days, was again destined to succeed.

To the surprise and unquestionably to the great eventual detriment of the public, the earl of Shelburne was not included in the new arrangement of administration. The intelligence of this change was, notwithstanding, received by the nation with transports of joy.

The INDIA BILL, concerning which the public judgment was at the first suspended, had now, by a multiplicity of able and popular tracts industriously circulated, been completely developed and explained; and it was almost universally condemned as a measure in the highest degree arbitrary and oppressive, and with consummate artifice calculated to perpetuate the power of an administration who were the objects of the national detestation. It is nevertheless a supposition absolutely inadmissible, that such men as the duke of Portland, lord John Caven-

BOOK XXI. 1783.

dish, and Mr. Fox, had concerted a measure in ously adapted to serve their own purpose—know or believing the same to be inimical to the esse interests of their country. In fact, no plan for government of India could be framed which not liable to very great objection. The bill of Fox was primarily and professedly designed for reformation of abuses in India; and as it was cessary for this purpose to establish a new and tensive source of authority and influence at h very plausible, and, to persons interested, de less, very convincing reasons might be adduce prove it more safe and constitutional to intrust power to parliamentary commissioners than to crown, whose influence it had been the grand favorite object of all true patriots to diminish. was it possible that the parliamentary rejectio this bill could have been attended with such si effects, had not the popularity of the minister whom it originated been already completely an ever annihilated by means of the fatal and CURSED COALITION.

Political conflict between the crown and the commons.

On the 22d of December, the house of comm being in a committee on the state of the na Mr. Erskine moved, "That an address be prese to the king, stating, that alarming reports had forth of an intended dissolution of parliament, humbly representing to his majesty the inco niences and dangers of a prorogation or dissol

in the present conjuncture; and entreating the sovereign to hearken to the advice of that house, and not to the secret advice of particular persons who might have private interests of their own, separate from the true interests of the king and people." BOOK XXI. 1783.

This address, which was of a complexion unknown in this country since the æra of the Revolution, was carried without a division. The answer of the king was very discreet and temperate. His majesty said, "It had been his constant object to employ the authority intrusted to him by the constitution to its true and only end—the good of the people; and he was always happy in concurring with the wishes and opinions of his faithful commons. He trusted they would proceed in the important matters mentioned in their address with a convenient speed, assuring them that he should not interrupt their meeting after their adjournment by any exercise of his prerogative either of prorogation or dissolution."

The house now with tolerable satisfaction adjourned for the usual Christmas recess to the 10th of January 1784, on which day the committee on the state of the nation was resumed; and several resolutions were brought forward by Mr. Fox, and agreed to by the house—prohibiting the lords of the treasury from assenting to the acceptance of the Company's bills from India—forbidding also the issue of any of the public money after a proroga-

BOOK XXI. 1784.

tion or dissolution of parliament, unless the Act of Appropriation shall have previously passed; and ordering accounts to be laid before the house of the moneys already issued.

These resolutions were followed by a motion from the earl of Surry—"1. That in the present situation of his majesty's dominions it was peculiarly necessary that there should be an administration that had the confidence of the public. 2. That the late changes in his majesty's councils were accompanied by circumstances new and extraordinary, and such as did not conciliate the confidence of that house." On this motion the house divided, but it was carried in the affirmative by 196 to 142 voices.

On the 16th of January a resolution was moved by lord Charles Spencer, "That the continuance of the present ministers in trusts of the highest importance and respectability was contrary to the principles of the constitution, and injurious to the interests of the king and people." Upon this question the house divided, ayes 205, noes 184; so that the anti-ministerial majority was, by an ominous defection, reduced from 54 to 21 voices.

Mr. Pitt's India bill rejected.

About this time the chancellor of the exchequer introduced into the house a bill for the better government of India, on principles which left the commercial concerns of the Company in their own hands; and established a board of control, consisting of certain commissioners appointed by the

king, possessing a negative on the proceedings of the Company in all matters of government or politics. On the motion of commitment, this bill was lost by 222 voices against 214—so that the opposition majority was now diminished to 8. BOOK XXI. 1784.

A still more encouraging circumstance was, that addresses of thanks and approbation to his majesty for the removal of his late ministers now began to flow in from every part of the kingdom; and became at length so universal, that upon no occasion whatever was the sense of the people at large more clearly, strongly, and unequivocally ascertained. In this the city of LONDON had taken the lead; and in their address they say, "Your faithful citizens lately beheld, with infinite concern, the progress of a measure which equally tended to encroach on the rights of your majesty's crown—to annihilate the chartered rights of the East India Company—and to raise a new power unknown to this free government, and highly inimical to its safety. As this dangerous measure was warmly supported by your majesty's late ministers, we heartily rejoice in their dismission, and humbly thank your majesty for exerting your prerogative in a manner so salutary and constitutional." And concluding in a manner very different from the usual tenor of their addresses in former times, they say, "Highly sensible of your majesty's paternal care and affection for your people, WE pray the Almighty that you may long

BOOK XXI. reign in peace over a free, a happy, and united nation."

1784. The nation declares in favor of the crown.

The popularity acquired by the monarch in consequence of this dismission was indeed so great as to efface all memory of former disagreements; and though originating in a cause merely accidental, and on the part of the crown from a sudden and passionate resentment at a supposed invasion of the prerogative, yet has it not suffered in the sequel any diminution: on the contrary, from an extraordinary concurrence of circumstances, the loyalty of the people has been elevated to a pitch of ardor which court-flattery itself will scarcely hesitate to acknowledge at least commensurate with the merits of the monarch.

Alarmed at the novel and dangerous circumstances of the nation, both parties seemed at length disposed to pause, and a judicious idea, suggested by the independent interest in the house of commons, of a new administration founded upon the widest and most comprehensive basis, was listened to with approbation; lord North, after all the mighty mischiefs of which he had been the occasion or the instrument, declaring himself willing to retire, if considered as the obstacle to a general union.

The king, by a message to the duke of Portland, expressed his desire that an interview might take place between his grace and Mr. Pitt, for the purpose of arranging a new plan of administration on

fair and *equal* terms. The duke, previously to the interview, requested to be informed in what sense he was to understand the words *fair* and *equal*; and Mr. Pitt declining any previous explanation, the negotiation terminated. But it was sufficiently evident that the question had reference to the superiority of voices claimed by the ex-ministers in the cabinet—a point which Mr. Fox still stood upon ground too high to concede. BOOK XXI. 1784.

The house of lords, hitherto the silent and passive spectators of this extraordinary contest, now thought proper to come forward; and at the motion of the earl of Effingham their lordships resolved, "1. That an attempt in any one branch of the legislature to suspend the execution of law by separately assuming to itself the direction of a discretionary power vested by act of parliament is unconstitutional"—alluding to the resolution of the commons respecting the non-acceptance of bills from India. "2. That by the known principles of the constitution the undoubted authority of appointing to the great offices of the executive government was solely vested in the king, and that this house had every reason to place the firmest reliance on his majesty's wisdom in the exercise of this prerogative." These resolutions, in the form of an address, were presented to the king. In return, the house of commons (February 16) resolved, at the motion of lord Beauchamp, "1. That the house had not an-

BOOK XXI. 1784.

sumed to itself a right to suspend the execution of law; and 2. That for them to declare their opinion respecting the exercise of any discretionary power was constitutional, and agreeable to established usage."

The opposition, who were yet the majority of the house of commons, found themselves daily in a more embarrassing situation. The king, the house of peers, and the nation at large, were now evidently and openly united in sentiment against them; their numbers were continually diminishing, and there was good reason to believe they would soon dwindle into a minority. Unsupported by the voice of the people, the house of commons can never appear great or respectable; but when they are also unsupported by the power and influence of the crown they must become insignificant and contemptible. Some further efforts, however, to sustain an apparently sinking cause, were yet with unbroken spirit attempted.

On the 20th of February an address, carried by a majority of 20 voices only, was presented to the king by the house, expressive of "the reliance the house had on the wisdom of the sovereign, that he would take such measures as might tend to give effect to the wishes of his faithful commons, by removing every obstacle to the formation of such an administration as the house of commons had declared to be requisite." To this the king again replied in

terms happily adapted to the occasion—mentioning "his recent endeavours to unite in the public service, on a fair and equal footing, those whose joint efforts might have a tendency to put an end to the unhappy divisions and distractions of the country; observing, nevertheless, that there was no specific charge or complaint suggested against his present ministers, and that numbers of his subjects had expressed to him in the warmest manner their satisfaction at the late changes. Under these circumstances he trusted his faithful commons would not wish that the essential offices of executive government should be vacated until such a plan of union as he had called for, and they had pointed out, could be carried into effect." BOOK XXI. 1784.

On the 1st day of March a yet stronger address was moved and carried, but by a still smaller majority, in which the house "humbly besought his majesty that he would be graciously pleased to lay the foundation of a strong and stable government, by the previous removal of his present ministers." To this address, which left no room for evasion, the king replied in the same mild and firm language—repeating, that no charge or specific complaint had been brought against his present ministers; and adding this remarkable observation, "that if there were any just ground for their removal, it ought to be equally a reason for not admitting them as a part

BOOK XXI. 1784.

of that extended and united administration which is stated to be requisite."

Addresses having been unavailingly tried, Mr. Fox in the following week moved a REPRESENTATION to the crown, which at great length, and in energetic language, stated "the dangerous and pernicious tendency of those measures and maxims by which a new system of executive government had been set up; which, wanting the confidence of that house, and acting in defiance to their resolutions, must prove at once inadequate by its inefficiency to the necessary objects of government, and dangerous by its example to the liberties of the people." The motion was carried by a MAJORITY of ONE. And here the contest may be said to have terminated; for the Mutiny Bill being brought forward on the following day, March 9, Mr. Fox, perceiving himself deserted by many of his partisans, abandoned his original intention of moving its postponement, as a security against a sudden and premature dissolution. The universal sense of the nation in favor of the new ministers, which could no longer be denied, was ascribed to an *unparalleled delusion*; but Mr. Fox disclaiming any intention of obstructing the supplies, a dissolution was said to be in the highest degree indefensible. Little regard, however, was paid to the arguments of the opposition against a measure so evidently to the advantage of the pre-

The parliament dissolved.

sent ministers; and on the 24th of March the parliament was prorogued, and the next day dissolved by proclamation, and a new parliament convened to meet on the 18th of May. BOOK XXI. 1784.

The influence of the crown being now combined with the inclination and independent interest of the country, at the general election the effect produced was prodigious. The COALITIONISTS, even those who once stood highest in the estimation of the public, were almost every where thrown out: lord John Cavendish, for the city; Mr. Foljambe, the heir of sir George Saville, for the county, of York; general Conway, for Bury; Mr. Coke, for Norfolk; Mr. Halsey, for Hertfordshire; Mr. Townshend, for Cambridge university; and Mr. Erskine, for Portsmouth. Mr. Fox himself, to the surprise of all, had a clear and great majority on the poll for Westminster, though the high-bailiff, by a scandalous partiality, refused to make the return in his favor,—for which an action was subsequently brought by Mr. Fox, in the court of King's Bench, and a verdict with large damages obtained.

Meeting of the new parliament 1784.

The king in his opening speech expressed "great satisfaction at meeting his parliament at this time, after having recurred in so important a moment to the sense of his people. He entertained a just and confident reliance that they were animated by the same sentiments of loyalty and attachment to the constitution which had been so fully manifested in

BOOK XXI. 1784.

every part of the kingdom. He recommended to their most serious consideration to frame suitable provisions for the good government of our possessions in the East Indies. Upon this subject parliament would not lose sight of the effect which the measures they adopted might have on our own constitution and our dearest interests at home." The address proposed on this occasion contained strong expressions of approbation respecting the late dissolution, which lord Surry on the ground of unanimity moved to omit. But Mr. Pitt declared, "that much as he was convinced of the importance of unanimity, he would not purchase a hollow unanimity by passing over a great constitutional measure which the circumstances of the times had made necessary and wise, and which had given the most entire satisfaction to every part of the kingdom." On this point, therefore, the house divided, and the amendment of the earl of Surry was rejected by a majority of 76 voices; so that the dissolution appeared to have completely answered its intended purpose, and from this period Mr. Pitt may be regarded as the constitutional and efficient minister of the nation.

Triumph of the minister.

END OF THE SEVENTH VOLUME.

R. Taylor and Co. Printers, 38, Shoe-Lane, Fleet-Street.

BOOK XXI. 1784.

sumed to itself a right to suspend the execution of law; and 2. That for them to declare their opinion respecting the exercise of any discretionary power was constitutional, and agreeable to established usage."

The opposition, who were yet the majority of the house of commons, found themselves daily in a more embarrassing situation. The king, the house of peers, and the nation at large, were now evidently and openly united in sentiment against them; their numbers were continually diminishing, and there was good reason to believe they would soon dwindle into a minority. Unsupported by the voice of the people, the house of commons can never appear great or respectable; but when they are also unsupported by the power and influence of the crown they must become insignificant and contemptible. Some further efforts, however, to sustain an apparently sinking cause, were yet with unbroken spirit attempted.

On the 20th of February an address, carried by a majority of 20 voices only, was presented to the king by the house, expressive of "the reliance the house had on the wisdom of the sovereign, that he would take such measures as might tend to give effect to the wishes of his faithful commons, by removing every obstacle to the formation of such an administration as the house of commons had declared to be requisite." To this the king again replied in